

S P E E C H E S

ON THE
S U B J E C T
OF AN
U N I O N,
DELIVERED IN THE LORDS AND COMMONS
OF
G R E A T B R I T A I N A N D I R E L A N D,
B E I N G
V O L U M E T H E S I X T H.
O F U N I O N T R A C T S.

I. Speech of the Rt. Hon. W. Pitt, January 31, 1799.

II. Speech of R. B. Sheridan, Esq. in Reply to Mr. Pitt, January 31, 1799.

III. Speech of Rt. Hon. H. Dundas, January 31, 1799.

IV. Speech of the Rt. Hon. H. Addington, Speaker of the House of Commons of Great Britain, February 12, 1799.

V. Speech of Robt. Peel, Esq. February 14, 1799.

VI. Speech of the Rt. Hon. Lord Auckland, in the House of Peers April 11, 1799.

VII. Speech of the Rt. Hon.

Lord Minto, in the House of Peers, April 11, 1799.

VIII. Speech of the Rt. Hon. Lord Sheffield, April 22, 1799.

IX. Speech of Mr. Dobbs, in the House of Commons of Ireland, March 5, 1799.

X. Speech of the Rt. Hon. J. Forster, Speaker of the House of Commons of Ireland, April 11, 1799.

XI. A Review of the Speech of the Rt. Hon. John Foster, by William Smith, Esq.

XII. Speech of the Rt. Hon. Lord Viscount Castlereagh, April 11, 1799.

D U B L I N:

SOLD BY J. MILLIKEN, 32, GRAFTON STREET.

1799.

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S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT, K

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 1799,

*On offering to the House the RESOLUTIONS which he proposed as the BASIS OF AN UNION between
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,*

*To which are added the SPEECHES of the Right Honourable
JOHN FOSTER, on the 12th and 15th of August,
1785, on the BILL for effectuating the INTER-
COURSE and COMMERCE between Great
Britain and Ireland, on permanent and
equitable Principles, for the mutual
Benefit of both Kingdoms.*

DUBLIN:

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RIGHT HONORABLE

WILLIAM PITT

HOUSE OF COMMONS

THURSDAY JANUARY 20 1870

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S P E E C H

OF THE

Right Hon. William Pitt,

&c. &c.

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The Speaker having read His MAJESTY'S
MESSAGE, viz.

GEORGE REX.

" His Majesty is persuaded that the unremitting industry
" with which our enemies persevere in their avowed de-
" sign of effecting the Separation of Ireland from this
" Kingdom, cannot fail to engage the particular attention
" of Parliament; and His Majesty recommends it to this
" House to consider of the most effectual means of counter-
" acting and finally defeating this design; and he trusts
" that a review of all the circumstances which have
" recently occurred (joined to the sentiment of mutual
" affection and common interest,) will dispose the Parlia-
" ment of both Kingdoms to provide, in the manner
B " which

“ which they shall judge most expedient, for settling such
 “ a complete and final adjustment as may best tend to im-
 “ prove and perpetuate a Connection essential for their
 “ common security, and to augment and consolidate the
 “ Strength, Power, and Resources of the British Empire.”

G. R.

Mr. PITT *rose, and spoke as follows :*

SIR,

WHEN I proposed to the House, the last time this subject was before them, to fix this day for the further consideration of His Majesty's Message, I certainly indulged the hope that the result of a similar communication to the Parliament of Ireland would have opened a more favourable Prospect than at present exists, of the speedy accomplishment of a measure which I then stated, and which I still consider, to be of the greatest importance to the power, the stability, and the general welfare of the Empire ; to the immediate interests of both kingdoms—and more particularly to the peace, the tranquillity, and the safety of Ireland : in this hope, I am sorry to say, I have for the present been disappointed, by the proceedings of the Irish House of Commons, of
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which we have been informed since this subject was last under consideration.

I feel and know that the Parliament of Ireland possesses the power, the intire competence, on the behalf of that country, alike to accept or reject a proposition of this nature—a power which I am by no means inclined to dispute. I see that at the present moment one House of Parliament in Ireland has expressed a repugnance, even to the consideration of this measure.—Feeling, Sir, as I have already stated, that it is important, not only as it tends to the general prosperity of the Empire of Great Britain, but (what, under every situation, must always be to me an object of the greatest moment) feeling that it was designed and calculated to increase the prosperity and ensure the safety of Ireland, I must have seen with the deepest regret that, at the very first moment, and before the nature of the measure could be known, it was so received.

But whatever may have been my feelings upon this subject, knowing that it is the undoubted

right of the Legislature of Ireland to reject or to adopt such measures as may appear to them injurious or beneficial, far be it from me to speak of its determination in any other terms but those of respect. Let it not, therefore, be imagined that I am inclined to press any sentiment, however calculated it may appear to me to benefit every member of the Empire, in any manner which may lead to hostile discussion between two kingdoms, whose mutual happiness and safety depend upon their being strictly and cordially united. But while I admit and respect the rights of the Parliament of Ireland, I feel that, as a Member of the Parliament of Great Britain, I also have a Right to exercise, and a Duty to perform. That Duty is to express, as distinctly as I can, the general nature and outline of the Plan, which, in my conscience, I think would tend in the strongest manner to ensure the safety and the happiness of both kingdoms.

While I feel, therefore, that as long as the House of Commons of Ireland view the subject in the light they do at present, there is no chance
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of its adoption, I do not think that I ought on that account to abstain from submitting it to the consideration of this Parliament; on the contrary I think it only the more necessary to explain distinctly the principles of the Measure, and to state the grounds upon which it appears to me to be entitled to the approbation of the Legislature.

If Parliament, when it is in possession of the basis upon which this Plan is founded, and of its general outline, should be of opinion with me, that it is founded upon fair, just, and equitable principles, calculated to produce mutual advantages to the two Kingdoms—if Parliament, I say, upon full explanation, and after mature deliberation, should be of that opinion, I should propose that its determination should remain recorded as that by which the Parliament of Great Britain were ready to abide, leaving it to the Legislature of Ireland to reject or to adopt hereafter, upon a full consideration of the subject.

There is no man will deny that in a great question of this nature, involving in it objects which,

which, in the first instance, are more likely to be decided upon by passion than by judgment; in a question in which an honest but, I must be allowed to say, a mistaken sense of National Pride is so likely to operate, that much misconstruction and misconception must inevitably happen. It therefore becomes the more necessary that the intentions of the Government which proposes the Measure, and the principles of the Measure itself, should be distinctly understood. But, Sir, in stating that intention and those principles, I look to something more than a mere vindication of Government for having proposed the Measure. I do entertain a confidence, even under the apparent discouragement of the opinion expressed by the Irish House of Commons, that this Measure is founded upon such clear, such demonstrable grounds of utility, is so calculated to add to the strength and power of the Empire, (in which the safety of Ireland is included, and from which it never can be separated) and is attended with so many advantages to Ireland in particular, that all that can be necessary for its ultimate adoption is, that it should be stated distinctly, temperately, and fully, and that it should be left to unprejudiced,

diced, the dispassionate, the sober judgment of the Parliament of Ireland. I wish that those whose interests are involved in this measure should have time for its consideration—I wish that time should be given to the Landed, to the Mercantile and Manufacturing Interest, that they should look at it with all its bearings, and that they should coolly examine and sift the popular arguments by which it has been opposed, and that then they should give their deliberate and final judgment.

I am the more encouraged in this hope of the ultimate success of this measure, when I see, notwithstanding all the prejudices which it has excited, that barely more than one-half of the members that attended the House of Commons were adverse to it; and that in the other House of Parliament in Ireland, containing, as it does, so large a portion of the property of the kingdom, it was approved of by a large majority.—When I have reason to believe that the sentiments of a large part of the People of that Country are favourable to it; and that much of the Manufacturing, and of the Commercial Interest of Ireland are already sensible
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how much it is calculated to promote their advantage, I think, when it is more deliberately examined, and when it is seen in what temper it is here proposed and discussed, that it will still terminate in that which can alone be a fortunate result.

It would be vain indeed to hope that a proposition upon which prejudices are so likely to operate, and which is so liable to misconception, should be unanimously approved. But the approbation I hope for is, that of the Parliament of Ireland, and of the intelligent part of the Public of that Country. It is with a view to this object that I think it my duty to bring this measure forward at present; not for the sake of urging its immediate adoption, but that it may be known and recorded; that the intention of the British Parliament may be known, in the hope that it will produce similar sentiments among our Countrymen in Ireland. With this view it is my intention not to go at present into any detailed statement of the plan, because should it ultimately be adopted, the minuter parts must necessarily become the objects of much distinct discussion; but to give such a general statement of the nature of the

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the measure as will enable the House to form a correct judgment upon it.

I shall therefore, Sir, before I sit down, open to the House a string of Resolutions, comprising the general heads of this plan. It will be necessary for me, for the purpose of discussing those Resolutions with regularity and convenience, to move that the House should resolve itself into a Committee. And I have already stated, that it is not my intention then to press the Committee to come to an immediate decision upon the Resolutions; but if, upon full and deliberate examination, the Resolutions which I shall have the honour to propose, and which contain as much as is necessary for an outline of the plan, shall be approved, my opinion is, that nothing can contribute more to obviate any doubts and dissatisfaction which may exist, than that Parliament should adopt those Resolutions, and that it should then humbly leave them at the foot of the Throne, leaving it to His Majesty's wisdom to communicate them to the Parliament of Ireland, whenever circumstances should appear favourable to such a Measure. I shall therefore, Sir, proceed as

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shortly as I can to state to the House the nature of the Resolutions, and of the Address which I shall propose to accompany them, if it should be the pleasure of the House to adopt them.

Having now, Sir, explained to the House the mode I mean to pursue, and my reasons for persisting, under the present circumstances, in submitting this Measure to the consideration of Parliament, I will endeavour to state the general grounds on which it rests, the general arguments by which it is recommended, and to give a short view of the particulars of the Plan.

As to the general principle upon which the whole of this Measure is founded, I am happy to observe, from what passed upon a former occasion, that there is not a probability of any difference of opinion. The general principle, to which both sides of the House perfectly acceded, is, that a perpetual Connection between Great Britain and Ireland was essential to the interests of both. The only Honourable Gentleman, who, when this subject was before the House on a former

former day, opposed the consideration of the Plan altogether, stated, in terms as strong as I could wish, the necessity of preserving the strictest Connection between the two Countries. I most cordially agree with him in that opinion, but I then stated, that I do not barely wish for the maintenance of that Connection as tending to add to the general strength of the Empire, but I wish for the maintenance of it with a peculiar regard to the local interests of Ireland, with a regard to every thing that can give to Ireland its due weight and importance, as a great member of the Empire. I wish for it with a view of giving to that Country the means of improving all its great natural Resources, and of giving it a full participation of all those blessings which this Country so eminently enjoys.

Considering the subject in this point of view, and assuming it as a proposition not to be controverted, that it is the duty of those who wish to promote the Interest and Prosperity of both Countries, to maintain the strongest connection between them, let me ask, what is the situation of Affairs that has called us to the discussion of this subject?

subject? This very connection, the necessity of which has been admitted on all hands, has been attacked by Foreign Enemies, and by Domestic Traitors. The dissolution of that connection is the great object of the hostility of the common Enemies of both Countries, it is almost the only remaining hope with which they now continue the contest. Baffled and defeated as they have hitherto been, they still retain the hope, they are still meditating attempts, to dissolve that connection. God grant that in this instance the same favour of Divine Providence, which has in so many instances protected this Empire, may again interpose in our favour, and that the attempts of the Enemy to separate the two Countries, may tend ultimately to knit them more closely together, to strengthen a Connection, the best pledge for the happiness of both, and so add to that power which forms the chief barrier to the civilized world, against the destructive principles, the dangerous projects, and the unexampled usurpation of France. This Connection has been attacked not only by the avowed Enemies of both Countries, but by internal Treason, acting in concert with the designs of the Enemy. Internal Treason,

Treason, which ingrafted Jacobinism on those diseases which necessarily grew out of the State and Condition of Ireland.

Thinking, then, as we all must think, that a close Connection with Ireland is essential to the interests of both Countries, and seeing how much this Connection is attacked, let it not be insinuated that it is unnecessary, much less improper, at this arduous and important crisis, to see whether some new arrangements, some fundamental regulations, are not necessary, to guard against the threatened danger. The foreign and domestic Enemies of these kingdoms have shewn, that they think this the vulnerable point in which they may be most successfully attacked; let us derive advantage, if we can, from the hostility of our Enemies — let us profit by the designs of an Enemy, who, if his conduct displays no true wisdom, at least possesses in an eminent degree that species of wisdom which is calculated for the promotion of mischief. They know upon what footing that Connection rests at this moment between the two Countries, and they feel the most ardent hope, that the two Parliaments will be infatuated enough

enough not to render their designs abortive, by fixing that Connection upon a more solid basis.

These circumstances I am sure will not be denied. And if upon other grounds we had any doubt, these circumstances alone ought to induce us, deliberately and dispassionately, to review the situation of the two Countries, and to endeavour to find out a proper remedy for an evil, the existence of which is but too apparent. It requires but a moment's reflection, for any man who has marked the progress of events, to decide upon the true state and character of this Connection. It is evidently one which does not afford that security which, even in times less dangerous and less critical than the present, would have been necessary, to enable the empire to avail itself of its strength and its resources.

When I last addressed the House on this subject, I stated that the settlement, which was made in 1782, so far from deserving the name of a Final Adjustment, was one that left the Connection between Great Britain and Ireland exposed to all the attacks of Party, and all the effects of accident.

accident. That Settlement consisted in the demolition of the System which before held the two Countries together. Let me not be understood as expressing any regret at the termination of that System. I disapproved of it, because I thought it was one unworthy the liberality of Great Britain, and injurious to the interests of Ireland. But to call that a System in itself—to call that a glorious fabric of human wisdom—which is no more than the mere demolition of another System—is a perversion of terms which, however prevalent of late, can only be the effect of gross misconception, or of great hypocrisy. We boast that we have done every thing, when we have merely destroyed all that before existed, without substituting any thing in its place. Such was the *Final Adjustment* of 1782; and I can prove it to be so, not only from the plainest reasoning, but I can prove it by the opinion expressed by the British Parliament at that very time. I can prove it by the opinion expressed by those very Ministers by whom it was proposed and conducted. I can prove it by the opinion of that very Government who boast of having effected a *Final Adjustment*. I refer, for what I have said, to proofs which they will find it

very

very difficult to answer; I mean their own acts, which will plainly shew that they were of opinion that a new System would be necessary. But, Sir, I will go farther—I will also produce the authority of one of those whose influence, on the present occasion, has been peculiarly exerted to prevent the discussion of the question in Ireland—of one, of whom I do not wish to speak but with respect, but for whom, nevertheless, I should convey an idea of more respect, than I can now feel to be due to him, if I were merely to describe him as the person who fills the same situation, in the House of Commons of Ireland, which you, Sir, hold among us, and of which on all occasions you discharge the duties with a dignity and impartiality which reflects so much credit on yourself, and so well supports the character and authority of the House.

On a former night, I read an Extract from the Journals, to shew what was the opinion even of those by whom the Final Adjustment was proposed, of that Measure. It would there appear, that the Message was sent to the Parliament of Ireland, recommending to them the adoption of some

some Plan for a Final Adjustment between the two Countries, and wishing to know what were the grounds of the grievances of which they complained. In answer to this Message, the Parliament of Ireland stated certain grievances, the principal of which was, the power claimed by the Parliament of Great Britain of making Laws to bind Ireland; but, with respect to that part of the Message which related to the propriety of adopting some Measures for a final adjustment between the two Countries, they were wholly silent. This Address was laid before the Parliament of Great Britain, to whom a similar Message had been sent, and on that ground was moved the Repeal of what was called the Declaratory Act, which Motion was assented to by the British Parliament. This satisfaction was complete to Ireland, as far as related to the grievance of which her Parliament had complained, viz. the Power of the British Parliament of making Laws for Ireland, because, by the Repeal of the Declaratory Act, that power was given up. But so far was the Minister of that day from considering that the Repeal of that Law finally terminated all differences, and established the Connection between the two Coun-

tries upon a solid basis, that he thought it necessary to move that a farther Settlement was indispensable for the maintenance of that Connection.

[Mr. SHERIDAN across the Table, desired that that part of the Journals to which Mr. PITT alluded, might be read.]

Mr. PITT continued. Sir, I have stated the substance of the Journals correctly; they were read on a former night, and the Honourable Gentleman may, if he chooses, have them read again.* If he does he will find that they fully justify the statement I have made, but I beg that at present I may not be interrupted. I do maintain, that upon a reference to the Journals of the period to which I have alluded, it will appear that a farther agreement between Great Britain and Ireland is there stated, in the opinion of the Administration of the day, to be absolutely necessary.

I beg farther to state, that after the Bill of which so much has been said, was passed, an Address to His MAJESTY was moved and carried, praying him to take such further measures as to him seemed proper, to strengthen the Connection

* Vide Appendix.

between

between the two Countries. His MAJESTY's most Gracious Answer, stating, that in compliance with the Address, he would immediately take such measures as might be necessary for that purpose, was delivered to the House by an Honourable Gentleman who then filled the office of Secretary of State, and whom we have not lately seen in the House, though he still continues to be a Member of it. I do assert, without the least fear of contradiction from any Gentleman whatever, that it was in the contemplation of the Government of that day, to adopt some measures of the nature alluded to in the Address; since that period, however, no such measure has been taken. I do also maintain, that that very system which by these very Ministers who brought it forward was found to be imperfect, even for the purpose of maintaining the Connection between the two Countries, remains at this moment in the same imperfect state. It leaves the two Countries with separate and independent Legislatures, connected only with this tie, that the Third Estate in both Countries is the same—that the Executive Government is the same—that the Crown exercises its power of assenting to Irish Acts of Parliament

under the Great Seal of Great Britain, and by the advice of British Ministers.

This is the only principle of Connection which is left by the Final Adjustment of 1782. Whether this is a sufficient tie to unite them in time of Peace ; whether in time of War it is sufficient to consolidate their strength against a Common Enemy ; whether it is sufficient to guard against those local jealousies which must necessarily sometimes exist between countries so connected ; whether it is calculated to give to Ireland all the important commercial and political advantages which she would derive from a closer Connection with Great Britain ; whether it can give to both Nations that degree of strength and prosperity which must be the result of such a Measure as the present, I believe need only to be stated to be decided.

But I have already said, that I have upon this point, the authority of an opinion to which I before alluded—an opinion delivered upon a very important Measure, very soon after the Final Adjustment of 1782. The Measure to which I refer, was that of the Commercial Propositions which
were

were brought forward in 1785. I am not now going to enter into a discussion of the merits of that Measure. The best, perhaps, that can be said of it is, that it went as far as circumstances would then permit, to draw the two Countries to a closer Connection. But those who think that the Adjustment of 1782 was final, and that it contained all that was necessary for the establishment of the Connection between the two Countries upon a firm basis, can hardly contend that the Commercial Propositions of 1785 were necessary to prevent the danger of separation between the two Countries, and to prevent the conflicting operation of Independent Legislatures. Yet, if I am not mistaken, there will be found, upon a reference to better Records than those in which Parliamentary Debates are usually stated (I mean a statement of what passed in the discussion upon those Propositions fourteen years ago, made, as I have understood, by some of the principal parties themselves) that the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER of that day in Ireland, in a Debate upon the Irish Propositions, held this language—"If this infatuated Country gives up the present offer, she may look for it again in vain." Here the

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Right Honourable Gentleman was happily mistaken ; Ireland has again had the offer of the same advantages, but more complete, and in all respects better calculated to attain their object ; and this offer the Right Honourable Gentleman has exerted all his influence to reject. But he goes on to say—" THINGS CANNOT REMAIN AS THEY ARE—Commercial jealousy is roused—" it will encrease with *two independent Legislatures*—" —and without an united interest in commerce, " in a commercial Empire, political Union will " receive many shocks, and *separation of interest* " must threaten *separation of Connection*, which " every *honest Irishman* must shudder to look at, " as a possible event."

Gentlemen will have the goodness to observe, that I am not now quoting these expressions as pledges given by that Right Honourable Gentleman that he would support a proposal for a Union between the two Countries, but I am adducing them to prove that the situation of the two Countries after the Final Adjustment of 1782, was such, in his opinion, as led to the danger of a separation between them. I am not now arguing that

that a Legislative Union is the only measure which can possibly be adopted, but I am contending that the Adjustment of 1782 was never considered as final, by those who now state it to be so as an argument against the consideration of the present measure. How the Honourable Gentleman on the other side of the House will evade this authority I do not know ;—an authority too, which, I must observe, he seems much more inclined to treat with respect than he was formerly.

But, Sir, it does not stop there. What is the evil to which he alludes? Commercial jealousies between two Countries acting upon the laws of two independent Legislatures, and from the danger of those Legislatures acting with jealousy to each other.—How can this evil be remedied? By two means only; either by some Compact entered into by the Legislatures of the two Countries respecting the mode of forming their commercial regulations, or else by blending the two Legislatures together; these are the only two means. I defy the wit of man to point out a third. The mode of compact was proposed in 1785, but unfortunately, in spite of that Right Honourable Gentleman's

Gentleman's eloquence and authority, who then stated the importance of guarding against the evil, it so happened that doctrines, derived chiefly from this side of the water, succeeded in convincing the Parliament of Ireland, that it would be inconsistent with their independence, to enter into any compact whatever. We have then the authority of that Rt. Honourable Gentleman to whom I have so often alluded, that the unsettled state in which the matter was left, would give, "Political Union many shocks, and lead to a separation of Connection." The experiment of a mutual Compact has been tried without success; the arrangement of that sort, which was proposed in 1785, in order to obviate the inconveniences stated by the Right Honourable Gentleman, was then attacked with the same success against his authority, as another and more effectual remedy has recently experienced under his auspices. The result then is, you must remain in the state which that Right Honourable Gentleman has described, with the seeds of separation in the system now established, and with the Connection, on which the mutual prosperity of both Countries depends in danger of being hourly dissolved, or you must again recur

recur to the proposal of a compact similar to that rejected in 1785, or you must resort to the best and most effectual remedy,—A LEGISLATIVE UNION.

I have dwelt longer, perhaps, upon this part of the subject than was absolutely necessary, because I believe there is scarcely any man who has ever asked himself, whether there is a solid, permanent system of Connection between the two Countries, who could, upon reflection, answer the question in the affirmative. But besides the authorities of the persons who made the arrangement in 1782, and of those who have since treated of it, to shew that it was not deemed to be final and complete ; I have further the test of experience to shew how imperfect it was, and how inadequate in practice to the great object of cementing the Connection, and placing it beyond the danger of being dissolved. In the single instance, which has occurred (and that a melancholy one which all of us deplored) in which we could feel the effects of two jarring Legislatures we did feel it. On that occasion, it might have produced the most signal calamities, had we not

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been rescued from its danger by an event, to which no man can now look back without feeling the utmost joy and exultation; feelings, which subsequent circumstances have served to heighten and confirm. Every Gentleman will know, that I must allude to the Regency. With two independent Legislatures, acting upon different principles, it was accident alone that preserved the identity of the Executive Power, which is the bond and security of the Connection: And even then the Executive authority, though vested in one person, would have been held by him by two different tenures, by one tenure in England, by another in Ireland, had not the interposition of Providence prevented a circumstance pregnant with the most imminent perils, and which might have operated to a separation of the two kingdoms.

After seeing the recorded opinion of Parliament, of those who made the arrangement of 1782, and after the decided testimony of experience on the subject, within the short period of sixteen years, perhaps, it is hardly necessary to appeal to farther
proofs

proofs of its inadequacy, or to desire Gentlemen to look forward to possible cases, which I could easily put, and which will naturally suggest themselves to the minds of all, who chuse to turn their attention to the subject.

But when we consider the distinct powers possessed by the two Legislatures on all the great questions of Peace and War, of alliances and confederacies,—(for they each have in principle, a right to discuss them and decide upon them, though one of them has hitherto been wisely restrained by discretion, from the exercise of that right),—have we not seen circumstances to induce us to think it possible, at least, that on some of these important questions the opinions and decisions of the two Parliaments might have been at variance? Are we 'talking of an indissoluble Connection, when we see it thus perpetually liable to be endangered? Can we really think that the interests of the Empire, or of its different branches rest upon a safe and solid basis at present? I am anxious to discuss this point closely with any man, either here or in Ireland. Will

it be said, that the Parliament of the latter Country is bound by our decision on the question of Peace or War? And if not so bound, will any man, looking at human Nature as it is, contend, that there is a sufficient certainty that the decision on that important subject will always be the same in both countries? I should be glad to receive a distinct answer to this question, from the Honourable Gentleman who has declared himself to be as warm a friend to the Connection between the two Countries as I am.

Suppose, for instance, that the present war, which the Parliament of Great Britain considers to be just and necessary, had been voted by the Irish Parliament, to be unjust, unnecessary, extravagant, and hostile to the principles of humanity and freedom.—Would that Parliament have been bound by this Country? If not;—what security have we, at a moment the most important to our common interest and common salvation, that the two Kingdoms should have but one friend and foe? I repeat it; I am eager to hear what can be said in justification of a basis so imperfect and unsound,

found, and liable to be shaken by so many accidents. I have already observed, that in the peculiar circumstances of the present moment, we may find strong reasons to prove the necessity of correcting the system of Connection between this Country and Ireland, of supplying its imperfections, and strengthening its weakness, than are to be found at any former period.

Having thus stated, and I think sufficiently proved, that the Settlement of 1782, in every point of view in which it can be considered, is imperfect, and inadequate to the object of maintaining the connection between the two kingdoms, I proceed next to the circumstances which peculiarly call upon us at the present moment to remedy that imperfection.

This Country is at this time engaged in the most important, and momentous conflict that ever occurred in the History of the World; a conflict in which Great Britain is distinguished for having made the only manly and successful stand against the common enemies of civilized society. We see the point in which that Enemy think us the
most

most affailable—Are we not then bound in policy and prudence, to strengthen that vulnerable point, involved as we are in a contest of Liberty against Despotism—of Property against Plunder and Rapine—of Religion and Order against Impiety and Anarchy? There was a time when this would have been termed declamation; but, unfortunately, long and bitter experience has taught us to feel that it is only the feeble and imperfect representation of those calamities (the result of French Principles and French Arms) which are attested by the wounds of a bleeding world.

Is there a man who does not admit the importance of a measure which, at such a crisis, may augment the strength of the Empire, and thereby ensure its safety? Would not that benefit to Ireland be of itself so solid, so inestimable, that, in comparison with it, all Commercial Interests, and the preservation of local habits and manners, would be trifling, even if they were endangered by the present measure;—which they undoubtedly are not? The people of Ireland are proud, I believe, of being associated with us in the great contest in which we are engaged, and must feel the

the advantage of augmenting the general force of the Empire. That the present measure is calculated to produce that effect, is a proposition which I think cannot be disputed. There is not in any Court of Europe a Statesman so ill informed as not to know, that the general power of the Empire would be increased to a very great extent indeed, by such a consolidation of the strength of the two kingdoms. In the course of the Century every writer of any information on the subject has held the same language, and in the general strength of the Empire both Kingdoms are more concerned than in any particular interests which may belong to either. If we were to ask the Ministers of our Allies, what measure they thought the most likely to augment the power of the British Empire, and consequently increase that strength by which they were now protected—if we were to ask the Agent of our Enemies, what measure would be the most likely to render their designs abortive—the answer would be the same in both cases, viz. the firm consolidation of every part of the Empire.

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There is another consideration well worth attention. Recollect what are the peculiar means by which we have been enabled to resist the unequalled and eccentric efforts of France, without any diminution, nay, with an increase, of our general prosperity—what, but the great Commercial Resources which we possess? A Measure, then, which must communicate to such a mighty Limb of the Empire as Ireland, all the Commercial advantages which Great Britain possesses, which will open the markets of the one Country to the other, which will give them both the common use of their Capital, must, by diffusing a large portion of wealth into Ireland, considerably increase the Resources, and consequently the strength, of the whole Empire.

But it is not merely in this general view, that I think the Question ought to be considered.—We ought to look to it with a view peculiarly to the permanent Interest and security of Ireland. When that Country was threatened with the double danger of hostile attacks by Enemies without, and of Treason within, from what quarter did she
derive

derive the means of her deliverance?—from the Naval Force of Great Britain—from the voluntary exertions of her Military of every description, not called for by Law—and from her pecuniary resources, added to the loyalty and energy of the Inhabitants of Ireland itself;—of which it is impossible to speak with too much praise, and which shews how well they deserve to be called the Brethren of Britons. Their own courage might, perhaps have ultimately succeeded, in repelling the dangers by which they were threatened, but it would have been after a long contest, and after having waded through seas of blood. Are we sure that the same ready and effectual assistance which we have happily afforded, on the present occasion, will be always equally within our power? Great Britain has always felt a common interest in the safety of Ireland; but that common interest was never so obvious and urgent as when the Common Enemy made her attack upon Great Britain, through the medium of Ireland, and when their attack upon Ireland went to deprive her of her Connection with Great Britain, and to substitute in stead, the new Government of the French Republic. When that danger threatened Ireland,

the purse of Great Britain was open for the wants of Ireland, as for the necessities of England.

I do not, Sir, state these circumstances, as upbraiding Ireland for the benefits we have conferred; far from it; but I state them with pleasure, as shewing the friendship and good will with which this Country has acted towards her. But if struggles of this sort may and must return again, if the worst dangers are those which are yet to come, dangers which may be greater from being more disguised—if those situations may arise when the same means of relief are not in our power, what is the remedy that reason and policy point out? It is to identify them with us—it is to make them part of the same Community, by giving them a full share of those accumulated blessings which are diffused throughout Great Britain; it is, in a word, by giving them a full participation of the Wealth, the Powers and the Glory of the British Empire. If then this Measure comes recommended not only by the obvious defects of the system which now exists, but that it has also the pre-eminent recommendation of increasing the general power of the Empire, and of guarding
against

against future danger from the Common Enemy, we are next to consider it as to its effects upon the internal condition of Ireland.

I know perfectly well, that as long as Ireland is separated from Great Britain, any attempt on our part to provide measures which we might think salutary, as respecting questions of contending sects or parties, of the claimed rights of the Catholics, or of the precautions necessary for the security of the Protestants—I know that all these, though they may have been brought forward by the very persons who are the advocates of the Final Adjustment in 1782, were, in fact, attacks upon the Independence of the Irish Parliament, and attempts to usurp the Right of deciding on points which can only be brought within our province by compact. Until the Kingdoms are united, any attempt to make regulations here for the internal state of Ireland must certainly be a violation of her Independence. But feeling as I do, for their interests and their welfare, I cannot be inattentive to the events that are passing before me; I must therefore repeat, that whoever looks at the circumstances to which I have alluded—whenever considers that the Enemy

have shewn by their conduct, that they considered Ireland as the weakest and most vulnerable part of the Empire ; whoever reflects upon those dreadful and inexcusable cruelties instigated by the Enemies of both Countries, and upon those lamentable severities by which the exertions for the defence of Ireland were unhappily, but unavoidably, attended, and the necessity of which is itself one great aggravation of the Crimes and Treasons which led to them, must feel that, as it now stands composed, in the hostile division of its Sects, in the animosities existing between ancient Settlers and original Inhabitants, in the ignorance and want of Civilization, which marks that Country more than almost any other Country in Europe, in the unfortunate prevalence of Jacobin Principles, arising from these causes, and augmenting their malignity, and which have produced that distressed state which we now deplore ; every one, I say, who reflects upon all these circumstances, must agree with me in thinking, that there is no cure but in the formation of a General Imperial Legislature, free alike from terror and from resentment, removed from the danger and agitation, and uninflamed by the prejudices and passions of that distracted Country.

I know

I know that it is impossible, if we wish to consider this subject properly, to consider it in any other point of view than as it affects the Empire in general. I know that the interests of the two Countries must be taken together, and that a man cannot speak as a true Englishman, unless he speaks as a true Irishman, nor as a true Irishman, unless he speaks as a true Englishman: But if it was possible to separate them, and I could consider myself as addressing you, not as interested for the Empire at large, but for Ireland alone, I should say, that it would be indispensably necessary, for the sake of that Country, to compose its present distractions, by the adoption of another system:—I should say, that the establishment of an Imperial Legislature was the only means of healing its wounds and of restoring it to tranquillity. I must here take the liberty of alluding to some topics which were touched upon during the discussion of the former night.

Among the great and known defects of Ireland, one of the most prominent features is, its want of industry and a capital; how are those wants to be supplied, but by blending more closely with
Ireland,

Ireland, the industry and the capital of this Country. But, above all, in the great leading distinctions between the People of Ireland, I mean their religious distinctions, what is their situation?—The Protestant feels that the claims of the Catholics threaten the existence of the Protestant ascendancy; while, on the other hand, the great body of Catholics feel the establishment of the National Church, and their exclusion from the exercise of certain rights and privileges, a grievance. Between the two, it becomes a matter of difficulty in the minds of many persons, whether it would be better to listen only to the fears of the former, or to grant the claims of the latter.

I am well aware that the subject of religious distinction is a dangerous and delicate topic, especially when applied to a country such as Ireland; the situation of which is different in this respect from that of every other. Where the established religion of the State is the same as the general religion of the Empire, and where the property of the Country is in the hands of a comparatively small number of persons professing that established religion, while the religion of a great majority

majority of the people is different, it is not easy to say, on general principles, what system of Church Establishments in such a Country would be free from difficulty and inconvenience. By many I know it will be contended, that the religion professed by a majority of the people, would at least be entitled to an equality of Privileges. I have heard such an argument urged in this House; but those who apply it without qualification to the case of Ireland, forget surely the principles on which English Interest and English Connection has been established in that Country, and on which its present Legislature is formed. No man can say, that, in the present state of things, and while Ireland remains a separate kingdom, full concessions could be made to the Catholics, without endangering the State, and shaking the Constitution of Ireland to its centre.

On the other hand, without anticipating the discussion, or the propriety of agitating the question, or saying how soon or how late it may be fit to discuss it; two propositions are indisputable: First, When the conduct of the Catholics shall be such as to make it safe for the Government to admit

admit them to the participation of the privileges granted to those of the Established Religion, and when the temper of the times shall be favourable to such a measure. When these events take place, it is obvious that such a question may be agitated in an United, Imperial Parliament, with much greater safety, than it could be in a separate Legislature. In the second place, I think it certain that, even for whatever period it may be thought necessary, after the Union, to withhold from the Catholics the enjoyment of those advantages, many of the objections which at present arise out of their situation would be removed, if the Protestant Legislature were no longer separate and local, but general and Imperial; and the Catholics themselves would at once feel a mitigation of the most goading and irritating of their present causes of complaint.

How far, in addition to this great and leading consideration, it may also be wise and practicable to accompany the measure by some mode of relieving the lower orders from the pressure of Tithes, which in many instances operate at present as a great practical evil, or to make—under
proper

proper Regulations, and without breaking in on the security of the present Protestant Establishment an effectual and adequate provision for the Catholic Clergy, it is not now necessary to discuss. It is sufficient to say, that these and all other subordinate points connected with the same subject, are more likely to be permanently and satisfactorily settled by an United Legislature, than by any local arrangements. On these grounds I contend, that with a view to providing an effectual remedy for the distractions which have unhappily prevailed in Ireland, with a view of removing those causes which have endangered, and still endanger its security, the measure which I am now proposing promises to be more effectual than any other which can be devised, and on these grounds alone, if there existed no other, I should feel it my duty to submit it to the House

But, Sir, though what I have thus stated relates most immediately to the great object of healing the dissensions, and providing for the internal tranquillity of Ireland; there are also other objects which, though comparatively with this of inferior importance, are yet in themselves

selves highly material, and in a secondary view, well worthy of attention.

I have heard it asked, when I pressed the measure, what are the positive advantages that Ireland is to derive from it? To this very question I presume the considerations which I have already urged afford a sufficient answer. But, in fact, the question itself is to be considered in another view; and it will be found to bear some resemblance to a question which has been repeatedly put, by some of the Gentlemen opposite to me, during the last six years. What are the advantages which Great Britain has gained by the present war with France?

To this, the brilliant successes of the British army by sea and land, our unexampled naval victories over all our enemies, the solid acquisition of valuable territory, the general increase of our power, the progressive extension of our commerce, and a series of events more glorious than any that ever adorned the page of our history, afford at once an ample and a satisfactory answer. But there is another general answer which we have

have uniformly given, and which would alone be sufficient: it is, that we did not enter into this war for any purpose of ambition; our object was not to acquire, but to preserve; and in this sense, what we have gained by the war is, in one word, ALL that we should have lost without it: it is, the preservation of our Constitution, our Independence, our Honour, our Existence as a Nation.

In the same manner I might answer the question with respect to Ireland, I might enumerate the general advantages which Ireland would derive from the effects of the Arrangement to which I have already referred, the Protection which she will secure to herself in the hour of danger. The most effectual means of increasing her Commerce and improving her Agriculture, the command of English Capital, the infusion of English Manners and English Industry, necessarily tending to ameliorate her Condition, to accelerate the progress of internal civilization, and to terminate those feuds and dissensions which now distract the Country, and which she does not possess, within herself, the power either to controul or to extinguish. She would see the avenue to Honours, to distinctions,

and exalted Situations in the general feat of Empire, opened to all those whose abilities and talents enable them to indulge an honourable and laudable ambition.

But, independent of all these advantages, I might also answer, that the question is not what Ireland is to gain, but what she is to preserve: not merely how she may best improve her situation, but how she is to avert a pressing and immediate danger. In this view, what she gains is the preservation of all those blessings arising from the British Constitution, and which are inseparable from her Connexion with Great Britain. Those Blessings of which it has long been the aim of France, in conjunction with domestic traitors, to deprive her, and on their ruins to establish (with all its attendant miseries and horrors) a Jacobin Republic, founded on French Influence, and existing only in subserviency to France.

Such, Sir, would be the answer, if we direct our attention only to the question of general advantage. And here I should be inclined to stop; but since it has also been more particularly asked,
what

what are the advantages which she is to gain, in point of Commerce and Manufactures, I am desirous of applying my answer more immediately and distinctly to that part of the subject: and, as I know that the statement will carry more conviction with it, to those who make the inquiry, if given in the words of the Right Honourable Gentleman, to whom, and to whose opinions, I have had more than one occasion to advert in the course of this night, I will read you an extract from his recorded sentiments on the subject, in the year 1785, on this same memorable occasion of the Commercial Propositions. Speaking of a solid and unalterable Compact between the two Countries, speaking expressly of the peculiar importance of insuring the continuance of those Commercial benefits, which she at that time held only at the discretion of this country, he says—
 “ The exportation of Irish Products to England,
 “ amounts to Two Millions and a Half annually;
 “ and the exportation of British Products, to Ireland,
 “ amounts to but One Million.”

He then proceeds to reason upon the advantage which Ireland would derive, under such circumstances.

cumstances, from guarding against mutual prohibitions; and he accompanies the statement, which I have just read, with this observation—

“ If, indeed, the Adjustment were to take
 “ away the Benefit from Ireland it would be a
 “ good cause for rejecting it; but, as it for ever
 “ confirms all the Advantages we derived from
 “ our Linen Trade, and binds England from
 “ making any law that can be injurious to it,
 “ surely Gentlemen who regard that trade, and
 “ whose fortunes and rents depend on its prosperity,
 “ will not entertain a moment's doubt about embracing the offer.”

Such was the reasoning of the Irish CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER; which I consider to have been perfectly just. With reference to his late opinions, I do not think I can more forcibly reply, to a person who signs his name to Propositions which declare that the ruin of the Linen Trade of Ireland is likely to be the consequence of an Union, than by opposing to him his own opinion. I shall be able to strengthen the former opinion of that Gentleman, by stating, that the progress that

that has been made in commercial advantages to Ireland, since 1785, has been such as to render his argument still more applicable. What is the nature of that Commerce, explained by the same person, in so concise and forcible a manner, that I am happy to use his own statement? He does not confine himself to the gross amount, but gives the articles in detail :—

“ Britain,” he says, “ imports annually from
 “ us Two Million Five Hundred Thousand
 “ Pounds of our Products, all, or very nearly all,
 “ duty free, and covenants never to lay a duty on
 “ them. We import about a Million of her’s,
 “ and raise a Revenue on almost every article of
 “ it, and reserve the power of continuing that
 “ Revenue. She exports to us Salt for our
 “ Fisheries and Provisions; Hops, which we
 “ cannot grow; Coals which we cannot raise;
 “ Tin, which we have not; and Bark, which we
 “ cannot get elsewhere: and all these without re-
 “ serving any duty.”

I will not tire the patience of the House, by reading farther extracts; but the Right Honour-
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able Gentleman's whole Speech, in like manner, points out the advantages of the Commercial Propositions (at that time under consideration) as a ground-work of a Compact between the two Countries, in 1785, on Commercial subjects.— But how stands the case now? The trade is at this time infinitely more advantageous to Ireland. It will be proved, from the documents which I hold in my hand, as far as relates to the mere interchange of manufactures, that the manufactures, exported to Ireland from Great Britain, in 1797, very little exceeded a Million sterling (the articles of produce amount to nearly the same sum) while Great Britain, on the other hand, imported from Ireland to the amount of near Three Millions in the manufactured articles of Linen and Linen Yarn, and between Two and Three Millions in Provisions and Cattle, besides Corn and other articles of produce.

In addition to these Articles, there are other circumstances of advantage to Ireland. Articles which are essential to her trade and to her subsistence, or serve as raw materials for her manufactures, are sent from hence free of duty. It is expressly

pressly stated on the same authority, that all that we take back from Ireland was liable to a Duty in that country on their exports ; so that in some instances we gave them a preference over ourselves.

The increasing produce of the chief article of their manufacture, and four-fifths of her whole export trade, are to be ascribed, not to that *Independent Legislature*, but to the liberality of the British Parliament. It is by the free admission of Linens for our market, and the Bounties granted by the British Parliament on its re-export, that the Linen-Trade has been brought to the height at which we now see it. To the Parliament of this Country, then, it is now owing, that a Market has been opened for her Linen to the amount of three millions. By the Bounty we give to Ireland, we afford her a double market for that article, and (what is still more striking and important) we have prevented a competition against her, arising from the superior cheapness of the Linen-Manufactures of the Continent, by subjecting their importation to a Duty of thirty per cent. Nothing would more clearly shew what would be the danger

to Ireland from the Competition in all its principal branches of the Linen-Trade, than the simple fact, that we even now import foreign Linens, under this heavy duty, to an amount equal to a seventh part of all that Ireland is able to send us, with the preference that has been stated. By this arrangement alone, we must therefore be considered, either as foregoing between seven and eight hundred thousand pounds per annum in revenue, which we should collect if we chose to levy the same duty on all Linens, Irish as well as Foreign, or on the other hand, as sacrificing perhaps at least a million sterling in the price paid for those articles, by the subjects of this Country, which might be saved, if we allowed the importation of all Linen, Foreign as well as Irish, equally free from Duty.

The present measure is, however, in its effects calculated not merely for a confirmation of the advantages on which the person to whom I have alluded has insisted. It is obvious that a fuller and more perfect connexion of the two countries, from whatever cause it may arise, must produce a greater facility and freedom of commercial intercourse,

tercourse, and ultimately tend to the advantage of both. The benefits to be derived to either country from such an arrangement must indeed, in a great measure, be gradual; but they are not on that account the less certain, and they cannot be stated in more forcible language than in that used in the speech to which I have referred.—

“ Gentlemen undervalue the reduction of British Duties on our Manufactures. I agree with them it may not operate soon, but we are to look forward to a final settlement, and it is impossible but that in time, with as good climate, equal natural powers, cheaper food, and fewer taxes, we must be able to sell to them. When commercial jealousy shall be banished by final settlement, and trade take its natural and steady course, the Kingdoms will cease to look to rivalry, each will make that fabrick which it can do cheapest, and buy from the other what it cannot make so advantageously. Labour will be then truly employed to profit, not diverted by Bounties, Jealousies, or Legislative Interference, from its natural and beneficial course. This system will attain its real object,

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“ consolidating the strength of the remaining
 “ parts of the Empire, by encouraging the com-
 “ munications of their market among themselves
 “ with preference to every part against all
 “ strangers !”

I am at least, therefore, secure from the design of appearing to deliver any partial or chimerical opinion of my own, when I thus state, on the authority of a person the best informed, and who then judged dispassionately, both the infinite importance to Ireland of securing permanently the great commercial advantages which she now holds at the discretion of Great Britain, and the additional benefit which she would derive from any settlement which opened to her gradually a still more free and compleat commercial intercourse with this country. And while I state thus strongly the commercial advantages to the sister kingdom, I have no alarm lest I should excite any sentiment of jealousy here. I know that the inhabitants of Great Britain wish well to the prosperity of Ireland ;—that, if the Kingdoms are really and solidly united, they feel that to increase the commercial wealth of one Country is not to diminish that

that of the other, but to increase the strength and power of both. But to justify that sentiment, we must be satisfied that the wealth we are pouring into the lap of Ireland is not every day liable to be snatched from us, and thrown into the scale of the enemy. If therefore Ireland is to continue, as I trust it will for ever, an essential part of the integral strength of the British Empire; if her strength is to be permanently ours, and our strength to be hers, neither I, nor any English minister, can ever be deterred by the fear of creating jealousy in the hearts of English men, from stating the advantages of a closer Connexion, or from giving any assistance to the Commercial Prosperity of that Kingdom.

If ever indeed I should have the misfortune to witness the melancholy moment when such principles must be abandoned, when all hope of seeing Ireland permanently and securely connected with this country shall be at an end, I shall at least have the consolation of knowing, that it will not be the want of temper or forbearance, of conciliation, of kindness, or of full explanation on our part, which

which will have produced an event so fatal to Ireland, and so dangerous to Great Britain. If ever the over-bearing power of prejudice and passion shall produce that fatal consequence, it will too late be perceived and acknowledged, that all the great commercial advantages which Ireland at present enjoys, and which are continually increasing, are to be ascribed to the liberal conduct, the fostering care, of the British Empire, extended to the sister kingdom as to a part of ourselves, and not (as has been fallaciously and vainly pretended) to any thing which has been done or can be done by the independent power of her own separate Legislature.

I have thus, Sir, endeavoured to state to you the reasons, why I think this measure adviseable; why I wish it to be proposed to the Parliament of Ireland, with temper and fairness; and why it appears to me, entitled at least to a calm and dispassionate discussion in that Kingdom. I am aware, however, that objections have been urged against the measure, some of which are undoubtedly plausible, and have been but too successful

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in their influence on the Irish Parliament. Of these objections I shall now proceed, as concisely as possible, to take some notice.

The first is, what I heard alluded to by the Honourable Gentleman opposite to me, when his Majesty's Message was brought down; namely That the Parliament of Ireland is incompetent to entertain and discuss the question, or rather, to act upon the measure proposed, without having previously obtained the consent of the people of Ireland, their Constituents. But, Sir, I am led to suppose from what the Honourable Gentleman afterwards stated, that he made this objection, rather by way of deprecating the discussion of the question, than as entertaining the smallest doubt upon it himself. —If, however, the Honourable Gentleman, or any other Gentleman on the other side of the House, should seriously entertain a doubt on the subject, I shall be ready to discuss it with him distinctly, either this night or at any future opportunity. For the present I will assume, that no man can deny the competency of the Parliament of Ireland (representing as it does, in the language

language of our Constitution, "*lawfully, fully, and freely, all the estates of the people of the realm*") to make Laws to bind that people, unless he is disposed to distinguish that Parliament from the Parliament of Great Britain; and, while he maintains the independence of the Irish Legislature, yet denies to it the lawful and essential powers of Parliament. No man who maintains the Parliament of Ireland to be co-equal with our own, can deny its competency on this question, unless he means to go the length of denying, at the same moment, the whole of the authority of the Parliament of Great Britain—to shake every principle of legislation—and to maintain, that all the acts passed, and every thing done by Parliament, or sanctioned by its authority, however sacred, however beneficial, is neither more nor less than an act of usurpation. He must not only deny the validity of the union between Scotland and England, but he must deny the authority of every one of the proceedings of the limited Legislature since the Union; nay, Sir, he must go still farther, and deny the authority under which we now sit and deliberate here, as a House of Parliament. Of course, he must deny the validity of the adjustment of 1782, and call
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in question every measure which he has himself been the most forward to have enforced. This point, Sir, is of so much importance, that I think I ought not to suffer the opportunity to pass, without illustrating more fully what I mean. If this principle of the incompetency of Parliament to the decision of the Measure be admitted, or if it be contended, that Parliament has no legitimate authority to discuss and decide upon it, you will be driven to the necessity of recognizing a principle, the most dangerous that ever was adopted in any civilized State. I mean the principle, that Parliament cannot adopt any measure new in its nature, and of great importance, without appealing to the constituent and delegating authority for directions. If that doctrine be true, look to what an extent it will carry you. If such an argument could be set up and maintained, you acted without any legitimate authority when you created the representation of the Principality of Wales, or of either of the Counties Palatine of England. Every Law that Parliament ever made, without that appeal, either as to its own Frame and Constitution, as to the qualification of the electors or the elected, as to

the great and fundamental point of the succession to the Crown, was made without due authority.

If we turn to Ireland itself, what do Gentlemen think of the power of that Parliament, which, without any fresh delegation from its Protestant constituents, associates to itself all the Catholic electors, and thus destroys a fundamental distinction on which it was formed? God forbid, that I should object to or blame any of these Measures! I am only stating the extent to which the principle (that Parliament has no authority to decide upon the present Measure) will lead; and, if it be admitted in one case, it must be admitted in all. Will any man say, that (although a Protestant Parliament in Ireland, chosen exclusively by Protestant Constituents, has by its own inherent power, and without consulting those constituents, admitted and comprehended the Catholics who were till then, in fact, a separate community) that Parliament cannot associate itself with another Protestant community, represented by a Protestant Parliament, having one interest with itself, and similar in its Laws, its Constitution, and its

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Established Religion? What must be said by those who have at any time been friends to any plan of Parliamentary Reform, and particularly such as have been most recently brought forward, either in Great Britain or Ireland? Whatever may have been thought of the propriety of the Measure, I never heard any doubt of the competency of Parliament to consider and discuss it. Yet I defy any man to maintain the principle of those plans, without contending that, as a Member of Parliament, he possesses a right to concur in disfranchising those who sent him to Parliament, and to select others, by whom he was not elected, in their stead. I am sure that no sufficient distinction, in point of principle, can be successfully maintained for a single moment; nor should I deem it necessary to dwell on this point, in the manner I do, were I not convinced that it is connected in part with all those false and dangerous notions on the subject of Government which have lately become too prevalent in the world. It may, in fact, be traced to that gross perversion of the principles of all political society, which rests on the supposition that there exists continually in every Government

vernment a Sovereignty *in abeyance* (as it were) on the part of the People; ready to be called forth on every occasion, or rather, on every pretence, when it may suit the purposes of the party or faction who are the advocates of this doctrine to suppose an occasion for its exertion. It is in these false principles that are contained the seeds of all the misery, desolation, and ruin, which in the present day have spread themselves over so large a proportion of the habitable Globe.

These principles, Sir, are, at length, so well known and understood in their practical effects, that they can no longer hope for one enlightened or intelligent advocate, when they appear in their true colours. Yet, with all the horror we all feel, in common with the rest of the World, at the effect of them, with all the confirmed and increasing love and veneration which we feel towards the Constitution of our Country, founded as it is, both in Theory and Experience, on principles directly the reverse; yet, there are too many among us, who, while they abhor and reject such opinions, when presented to them in their naked deformity, suffer them in a more disguised shape

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to be gradually infused into their minds, and insensibly to influence and bias their sentiments and arguments on the greatest and most important discussions. This concealed poison is now more to be dreaded than any open attempt to support such principles by argument or to enforce them by arms. No society, whatever be its particular form, can long subsist, if this principle is once admitted. In every Government, there must reside somewhere a supreme, absolute, and unlimited authority. This is equally true of every lawful Monarchy—of every Aristocracy—of every pure Democracy (if indeed such a form of Government ever has existed, or ever can exist)—and of those mixed Constitutions formed and compounded from the others, which we are justly inclined to prefer to any of them. In all these Governments, indeed alike, that power may by possibility be abused, but whether the abuse is such as to justify and call for the interference of the people collectively, or, more properly speaking, of any portion of it, must always be an extreme case and a question of the greatest and most perilous responsibility, not in Law only, but in Conscience and in Duty, to all those who either act upon it themselves,

themselves, or persuade others to do so. But no provision for such a case ever has been or can be made before-hand; it forms no chapter in any known code of laws, it can find no place in any system of human jurisprudence. But, above all, if such a principle can make no part of any established Constitution, not even of those where the Government is so framed as to be most liable to the abuse of its powers, it will be preposterous indeed to suppose that it can be admitted in one where those powers are so distributed and balanced as to furnish the best security against the probability of such an abuse. Shall that principle be sanctioned as a necessary part of the best Government, which cannot be admitted to exist even as a check upon the worst! Pregnant as it is with danger and confusion, shall it be received and established in proportion as every reason which can ever make it necessary to recur to it is not likely to exist? Yet, Sir, I know not how it is, that, in proportion as we are less likely to have occasion for so desperate a remedy, in proportion as a Government is so framed as to provide within itself the best guard and control on the exercise of every branch of authority, to furnish the means of

of preventing or correcting every abuse of power, and to secure, by its own natural operation, a due attention to the interest and feelings of every part of the community, in that very proportion persons have been found perverse enough to imagine, that such a Constitution admits and recognizes, as a part of it, that which is inconsistent with the nature of any Government, and above all, inapplicable to our own.

I have said more, Sir, upon this subject than I should have thought necessary, if I had not felt that this false and dangerous mockery of the *Sovereignty of the People* is in truth one of the chief elements of Jacobinism, one of the favourite impostures to mislead the understanding, and to flatter and inflame the passions of the mass of mankind, who have not the opportunity of examining and exposing it, and that as such on every occasion, and in every shape in which it appears, it ought to be combated and resisted by every friend to civil order, and to the peace and happiness of mankind.

Sir, the next and not the least prevalent objection, is one which is contained in words which are an appeal to a natural and laudable, but what
I must

I must call an erroneous and mistaken sense of national pride. It is an appeal to the generous and noble passions of a nation easily inflamed under any supposed attack upon its honour, I mean the attempt to represent the question of a Union by compact between the Parliaments of the two Kingdoms as a question involving the Independance of Ireland.—It has been said, that no compensation could be made to any country for the surrender of its National Independance. Sir, on this, as well as on every part of the question, I am desirous Gentlemen should come closely to the point, that they should sift it to the bottom, and ascertain upon what grounds and principles their opinion really rests. Do they mean to maintain that in any humiliating, in any degrading sense of the word which can be acted upon practically as a rule, and which can lead to any useful conclusion, that at any time when the Government, of any two separate Countries unite in forming one more extensive empire, that the individuals who compose either of the former narrow societies are afterwards less members of an independant country, or to any valuable and useful purpose less possessed of political freedom or civil

civil happiness than they were before. It must be obvious to every Gentleman who will look at the subject, in tracing the history of all the countries, the most proud of their present existing independance, of all the nations in Europe, there is not one that could exist in the state in which it now stands, if that principle had been acted upon by our forefathers; and Europe must have remained to this hour in a state of ignorance and barbarism, from the perpetual warfare of independent and petty states. In the instance of our own Country, it would be a superfluous waste of time to enumerate the steps by which all its parts were formed into one Kingdom; but will any man in general assert, that in all the different Unions which have formed the principal states of Europe, their inhabitants have become less free, that they have had less of which to be proud, less scope for their own exertions, than they had in their former situation. If this doctrine is to be generally maintained, what becomes of the situation at this hour of any one county of England, or of any one county of Ireland, now united under the independant Parliament of that Kingdom? If it be pushed to its full extent, it is obviously incompatible with all civil society. As

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the former principle of the sovereignty of the people strikes at the foundation of all governments, so this is equally hostile to all political confederacy, and mankind must be driven back to what is called the state of nature.

But while I combat this general and abstract principle, which would operate as an objection to every union between separate states, on the ground of the sacrifice of independance, do I mean to contend that there is in no case just ground for such a statement? Far from it: it may become, on many occasions, the first duty of a free and generous people. If there exists a country which contains within itself the means of military protection, the naval force necessary for its defence, which furnishes objects of industry sufficient for the subsistence of its inhabitants, and pecuniary resources adequate to maintaining, with dignity, the rank which it has attained among the nations of the world; if, above all, it enjoys the blessings of internal content and tranquillity, and possesses a distinct constitution of its own, the defects of which, if any, it is within itself capable of correcting, and if that constitution be equal, if not superior, to that of any other in the world, or (which is nearly the same thing)

thing) if those who live under it believe it to be so, and fondly cherish that opinion, I can indeed well understand that such a country must be jealous of any measure, which, even by its own consent, under the authority of its own lawful government, is to associate it as a part of a larger and more extensive empire.

But, Sir, if, on the other hand, it should happen that there be a country which, against the greatest of all dangers that threaten its peace and security, has not adequate means of protecting itself without the aid of another nation; if that other be a neighbouring and kindred nation, speaking the same language, whose laws, whose customs, and habits are the same in principle, but carried to a greater degree of perfection, with a more extensive commerce, and more abundant means of acquiring and diffusing national wealth; the stability of whose government—the excellence of whose constitution—is more than ever the admiration and envy of Europe, and of which the very Country of which we are speaking can only boast an inadequate and imperfect resemblance;—under such circumstances, I would ask, what conduct would be prescribed by every

rational principle of dignity, of honour, or of interest? I would ask, whether this is not a faithful description of the circumstances which ought to dispose Ireland to a Union? Whether Great Britain is not precisely the nation with which, on these principles, a Country, situated as Ireland is, would desire to unite? Does a Union, under such circumstances, by free consent, and on just and equal terms, deserve to be branded as a proposal for subjecting Ireland to a foreign yoke?—Is it not rather the free and voluntary association of two great Countries, which join, for their common benefit, in one Empire, where each will retain its proportional weight and importance, under the security of equal laws, reciprocal affection, and inseparable interests, and which want nothing but that indissoluble Connection to render both invincible.

*Non ego nec Teucris Italos parere jubebo
Nec nova regna peto ; paribus se legibus ambæ
Invictæ gentes æterna in fœdera mittant.*

Sir, I have nearly stated all that is necessary for me to trouble the House with ; there are, however, one or two other objections which I wish not entirely to pass over : One of them is, a
general

general notion that a Union with Great Britain must necessarily increase one of the great evils of Ireland, by producing depopulation in many parts of the Country, and by increasing greatly the number of absentees. I do not mean to deny that this effect would, to a limited extent, take place during a part of the year; but I think it will not be difficult for me to prove, that this circumstance will be more than counterbalanced by the operation of the system in other respects.

If it be true that this measure has an inevitable tendency to admit the introduction of that British Capital which is most likely to give life to all the operations of Commerce, and to all the improvements of Agriculture; if it be that which above all other considerations is most likely to give security, quiet, and internal repose to Ireland; if it is likely to remove the chief bar to the internal advancement of wealth and of civilization, by a more intimate intercourse with England; if it is more likely to communicate from hence those habits which distinguish this Country, and which, by a continued gradation, unite the highest and the lowest orders of the community without a chasm in any part of the system; if it

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is not only likely to invite (as I have already said) English Capital to set Commerce in motion, but to offer it the use of new markets, to open fresh resources of wealth and industry; can wealth, can industry, can civilization increase among the whole bulk of the people without its much more than counterbalancing the partial effect of the removal of the few individuals who, for a small part of the year, would follow the seat of Legislation? Will it be supposed that the mere absence of Parliament from Dublin, if it would still remain the centre of Education and of the internal commerce of a country increasing in improvement; if it would still remain the seat of legal discussion, which must always increase with an increase of property and occupation, what ground is there to suppose, with a view even to the interests of those whose partial interests have been most successfully appealed to; what reason is there to suppose that, with a view either to the respectable Body of the Bar, to the Merchant, or Shopkeeper of Dublin (if it were possible to suppose that a transaction of this sort ought to be referred to that single criterion) that they would not find their proportionate share of advantage in the general advantage

advantage of the State? Let it be remembered, also, that if the transfer of the Seat of Legislature may call from Ireland to England the Members of the United Parliament, yet, after the Union, property, influence and consideration in Ireland will lead, as much as in Great Britain, to all the objects of imperial ambition; and there must, consequently, exist a new incitement to persons to acquire property in that Country, and to those who possess it, to reside there and to cultivate the good opinion of those with whom they live, and to extend and improve their influence and connections.

But, Sir, I need not dwell longer on argument, however it may satisfy my own mind, because we can on this question refer to experience. I see every Gentleman anticipates that I allude to Scotland. What has been the result of the Union there? A Union, give me leave to say, as much opposed, and by much the same arguments, prejudices, and misconceptions, as are urged, at this moment, creating too the same alarms, and provoking the same outrages, as have lately taken place in Dublin. Look at the metropolis

metropolis of Scotland: the population of Edinburgh has been more than doubled since the Union, and a new city added to the old. But we may be told, that Edinburgh has engrossed all the commerce of that country, and has those advantages which Dublin cannot expect. Yet while Edinburgh, deprived of its Parliament, but retaining, as Dublin would retain, its Courts of Justice; continuing, as Dublin would continue, the resort of those whose circumstances would not permit them to visit a distant metropolis; continuing, as Dublin would continue, the seat of national education, while Edinburgh has baffled all the predictions of that period, what has been the situation of Glasgow? The population of Glasgow, since the Union, has increased in the proportion of between five and six to one: look at its progress in manufactures; look at its general advantages, and tell me what ground there is, judging by experience in aid of theory, for those gloomy apprehensions which have been so industriously excited.

There remains, Sir, another general line of argument, which I have already anticipated, and I hope answered, that the commercial privileges

now

now enjoyed by Ireland, and to which it owes so much of its prosperity, would be less secure than at present. I have given an answer to that already, by stating that they are falsely imputed to the independence of the Irish Parliament, for that they are in fact owing to the exercise of the voluntary discretion of the British Parliament, unbound by compact, prompted only by its natural disposition to consider the interests of Ireland the same as its own; and if that has been done while Ireland is only united to us in the imperfect and precarious manner in which it is, while it has a separate Parliament, notwithstanding the commercial jealousies of our own manufactures; if under these circumstances we have done so, if we have done so with no other connection than that which now subsists, and while Ireland has no share in our representation; what fresh ground can there be for apprehension, when she will have her proportionate weight in the Legislature, and will be united with us as closely as Lancashire or Yorkshire, or any other county in Great Britain.

Sir, I have seen it under the same authority to which I am sorry so often to advert, that the

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Linen Trade would be injured, and that there will be no security for its retaining its present advantages. I have already stated to you (and with that very authority in my favour) that those advantages are at present precarious, and that their security can only arise from Compact with Great Britain. Such a Compact, this Measure would establish in the most solemn manner; but besides this, Sir, the natural policy of this Country, not merely its experienced liberality, but the identity of Interests after a Union, would offer a security worth a thousand Compacts.

Sir, the only other general topic of objection is (that upon which great pains have been taken to raise an alarm in Ireland) the idea that the main principle of the Measure was to subject Ireland to a load of Debt and an increase of Taxes, and to expose her to the consequences of all our alledged difficulties and supposed necessities.

Sir, I hope the zeal, the spirit, and the liberal and enlarged policy, of this Country, has given ample proof that it is not from a pecuniary motive that we seek an Union. If it is not
desirable

desirable on the grounds I have stated, it cannot be recommended for the mere purpose of Taxation ; but to quiet any jealousy on this subject, here again let us look to Scotland: is there any instance where, with 45 Members on her part and 513 on ours, that that part of the United Kingdom has paid more than its proportion to the general burthens?—Is it then, Sir, any ground of apprehension, that we are likely to tax Ireland more heavily when she becomes associated with ourselves?—To tax in its due proportion the whole of the Empire, to the utter exclusion of the idea of the predominance of one part of society over another, is the great characteristic of British Finance, as Equality of Laws is of the British Constitution.

But, Sir, in addition to this, if we come to the details of this proposition, it is in our power to fix, for any number of years which shall be thought fit, the proportion by which the Contribution of Ireland, to the expences of the State, shall be regulated; that these proportions shall not be such as would make a contribution greater than the necessary amount of its own present necessary

expences as a separate Kingdom ; and, even after that limited period, the proportion of the whole contribution, from time to time, might be made to depend on the comparative produce, in each Kingdom, of such general taxes as might be thought to afford the best criterion of their respective wealth. Or, what I should hope would be found practicable, the system of internal taxation in each county might gradually be so equalized and assimilated, on the leading articles, as to make all rules of specific proportion unnecessary, and to secure, that Ireland shall never be taxed but in proportion as we tax ourselves.

The application of these principles, however, will form matter of future discussion ; I mention them only as strongly shewing, from the misrepresentation which has taken place on this part of the subject, how incumbent it is upon the House to receive these propositions, and to adopt, after due deliberation, such resolutions as may record to Ireland the terms upon which we are ready to meet her. And, in the mean time, let us wait, not without impatience, but without dissatisfaction, for that moment, when the effect of reason and
discussion

discussion may reconcile the minds of men, in that Kingdom, to a Measure which I am sure will be found as necessary for their peace and happiness, as it will be conducive to the general security and advantage of the British Empire.

Sir, it remains to be my duty to lay these Resolutions before the House, wishing that the more detailed discussion of them may be reserved to a future day.

RESOLUTIONS.

FIRST.

That in order to promote and secure the essential Interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and to consolidate the Strength, Power, and Resources of the British Empire, it will be advisable to concur in such measures as may best tend to unite the two Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland into one Kingdom, in such manner, and on such Terms and Conditions as may be established by Acts of the respective Parliaments of His Majesty's said Kingdoms.

SECOND.

That it appears to this Committee that it would be fit to propose as the first Article to serve as a Basis of the said Union, that the said Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland shall, upon a day to be agreed upon, be united into one Kingdom, by the name of the UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

THIRD.

THIRD.

That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that the Succession to the Monarchy and the Imperial Crown of the said United Kingdoms, shall continue limited and settled, in the same manner as the Imperial Crown of the said Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland now stands limited and settled, according to the existing Laws, and to the Terms of the Union between England and Scotland.

FOURTH.

That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that the said United Kingdom be represented in one and the same Parliament, to be stiled the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and that such a number of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and such a number of Members of the House of Commons as shall be hereafter agreed upon by Acts of the respective Parliaments as aforesaid, shall sit and vote in the said Parliament on the part of Ireland, and shall be summoned, chosen and returned, in such manner as shall be fixed by an Act of the Parliament of Ireland previous to the said Union; and that every Member hereafter to sit and vote in the said Parliament of the United Kingdom shall, until the said Parliament shall otherwise provide, take and subscribe the same Oaths, and make the same Declarations as are by Law required to be taken, subscribed and made by the Members of the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland.

FIFTH.

That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that the Churches of England and Ireland, and the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government thereof, shall be preserved as now by Law Established.

SIXTH,

SIXTH.

That for the same purpose it appears also to this Committee, that it would be fit to propose that His Majesty's Subjects in Ireland shall at all times hereafter be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing in respect of Trade and Navigation, in all Ports and Places belonging to Great Britain, and in all cases with respect to which Treaties shall be made by His Majesty, his Heirs or Successors, with any Foreign Power, as His Majesty's Subjects in Great Britain; that no Duty shall be imposed on the Import or Export between Great Britain and Ireland of any Articles now Duty free: and that on other Articles there shall be established, for a time to be limited, such a moderate rate of equal Duties as shall, previous to the Union, be agreed upon and approved by the respective Parliaments, subject, after the expiration of such limited time, to be diminished equally with respect to both Kingdoms, but in no case to be increased; that all Articles which may at any time hereafter be imported into Great Britain from Foreign Parts, shall be importable through either Kingdom into the other, subject to the like Duties and Regulations as if the same were imported directly from Foreign Parts; that where any Articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either Kingdom, are subject to any internal Duty in one Kingdom, such countervailing Duties (over and above any Duties on import to be fixed as aforesaid) shall be imposed as shall be necessary to prevent any inequality in that respect: and that all other matters of Trade and Commerce other than the foregoing, and than such others as may before the Union be specially agreed upon for the due encouragement of the Agriculture and Manufactures of the respective Kingdoms, shall remain to be regulated from time to time by the United Parliament.

SEVENTH,

SEVENTH.

That for the like purpose it would be fit to propose, that the charge arising from the payment of the Interest or Sinking Fund for the reduction of the Principal of the Debt incurred in either Kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively. That for a number of Years to be limited, the future ordinary expences of the UNITED KINGDOM, in Peace or War, shall be defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland jointly, according to such proportions as shall be established by the respective Parliaments previous to the Union; and that after the expiration of the time to be so limited, the proportion shall not be liable to be varied, except according to such rates and principles as shall be in like manner agreed upon previous to the Union.

EIGHTH.

That for the like purpose it would be fit to propose, that all Laws in force at the time of the Union, and that all the Courts of Civil or Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction within the respective Kingdoms, shall remain as now by Law established within the same, subject only to such alterations or regulations from time to time as circumstances may appear to the Parliament of the UNITED KINGDOM to require.

That the foregoing RESOLUTIONS be laid before His Majesty with an humble ADDRESS, assuring His Majesty that we have proceeded with the utmost attention to the consideration of the important objects recommended to us in His Majesty's Gracious MESSAGE.

That we entertain a firm persuasion that a COMPLETE AND INTIRE UNION between Great Britain and Ireland, founded on equal and liberal principles, on the similarity
of

of Laws, Constitution and Government, and on a sense of mutual Interests and Affections, by promoting the Security, Wealth and Commerce of the respective Kingdoms, and by allaying the distractions which have unhappily prevailed in Ireland, must afford fresh means of opposing at all times an effectual resistance to the destructive Projects of our Foreign and Domestic Enemies, and must tend to confirm and augment the Stability, Power, and Resources of the Empire.

Impressed with these considerations, we feel it our duty humbly to lay before his Majesty such Propositions as appear to us best calculated to form the basis of such a settlement, leaving it to His Majesty's wisdom, at such time and in such manner as His Majesty, in his Parental Solitude for the happiness of his People, shall judge fit, to communicate these Propositions to His Parliament of Ireland, with whom we shall be at all times ready to concur in all such Measures as may be found most conducive to the accomplishment of this great and salutary Work. And we trust that, after full and mature consideration, such a Settlement may be framed and established, by the deliberative Consent of the Parliaments of both Kingdoms, as may be conformable to the Sentiments, Wishes, and real Interests of His Majesty's faithful Subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, and may unite them inseparably in the full enjoyment of the blessings of our free and invaluable Constitution, in the support of the Honour and Dignity of His Majesty's Crown, and in the preservation and advancement of the Welfare and Prosperity of the whole British Empire,

APPENDIX.

The following Message was presented in the House of Commons by Mr. Fox, Secretary of State, on the 9th of April, 1782.

GEORGE R.

HIS Majesty being concerned to find that discontents and jealousies are prevailing among his loyal Subjects in Ireland, upon matters of great weight and importance, earnestly recommends to this House, to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to such a Final Adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to both Kingdoms.

G. R.

1st May

1st May, 1782.

Mr. Secretary Fox presented to the House, by His Majesty's command,

Copy of the Message to the House of Lords and Commons in Ireland, from His Grace the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, delivered the 16th April, 1782 : And also,

Copy of a Resolution of the House of Lords in Ireland, Mercurii, 17^o die Aprilis, 1782 : And also,

Copy of a Resolution of the House of Commons in Ireland, Martis, 16^o die Aprilis, 1782.

And the Titles of the said Copies were read.

The said Copies are as followeth ; viz.

Copy of the Message to the Houses of Lords and Commons in Ireland, from His Grace the Lord Lieutenant, delivered the 16th April, 1782.

PORTLAND,

I have it in command from His Majesty, to inform this House, that His Majesty being con-

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concerned

concerned to find that discontents and jealousies are prevailing among his loyal Subjects of this Country, upon matters of great weight and importance, His Majesty recommends to this House to take the same into their most serious consideration, in order to such a Final Adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to his Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland.

P.

*Copy of a Resolution of the House of Lords in
Ireland, Mercurii, 17^o die Aprilis, 1782.*

RESOLVED, By the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled *Nemine dissentiente*, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, to return him our thanks for the most gracious Message sent to this House by his Majesty's command, through the medium of His Grace the Lord Lieutenant, and to assure him of our most unshaken loyalty and attachment to His Majesty's person and government, and of the lively sense we entertain of his paternal care of his people of Ireland, in thus enquiring into the
discontents

discontents and jealousies that subsist amongst them, in order to such Final Adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to his kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland.

That, thus encouraged by his Royal Interposition, we shall beg leave, with all duty and affection, to lay before His Majesty the cause of such discontents and jealousies,

To represent to His Majesty, That His Subjects of Ireland are entitled to a free constitution; that the Imperial Crown of Ireland is inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great-Britain, on which Connection the happiness of both nations essentially depends; but that the Kingdom of Ireland is a distinct dominion, having a Parliament of her own, the sole Legislature thereof.

That there is no power whatsoever competent to make laws to bind this nation, except the King, Lords, and Commons, of Ireland; upon which exclusive Right of Legislation we consider the very essence of our liberties to depend, a Right which we claim as the Birth-right of the People of Ireland,

land, and which we are determined, in every situation of life, to assert and maintain.

To represent to His Majesty, That we have seen with concern certain claims, both of legislature and judicature, asserted by the Parliament of Great Britain, in an Act passed in Great Britain in the sixth year of George the First, intituled
 “ An Act for the better securing the Depen-
 “ dency of Ireland upon the Crown of Great
 “ Britain :”

That we conceive the said Act, and the powers thereby claimed, to be the great and principal causes of the discontents and jealousies that subsist in this Kingdom ;

To assure His Majesty, That this House considers it as a matter of constitutional right and protection, that all Bills which become Law should receive the approbation of His Majesty, under the Seal of Great Britain ; but we consider the practice of suppressing our Bills in the Council of Ireland, or altering them any where, to be a matter which calls for redress :

To

To represent to His Majesty, That an Act intituled “ An Act for the better Accommodation “ of His Majesty’s Forces ;” being unlimited in duration, but which, from the particular circumstances of the times, passed into a law, has been the cause of much jealousy and discontent in this Kingdom :

That we have thought it our duty to lay before His Majesty these, the principal causes of the discontents and jealousies subsisting in this Kingdom :

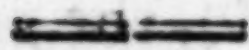
That we have the greatest reliance on His Majesty’s wisdom, the most sanguine expectations from his virtuous choice of a Chief Governor, and the greatest confidence in the wise and constitutional Council His Majesty has adopted :

That we have, moreover, a high sense and veneration for the British Character, and do therefore conceive, that the proceedings of this country, founded as they are in right, and supported by constitutional liberty, must have excited the approbation and esteem of the British nation :

That

That we are the more confirmed in this hope, inasmuch as the people of this Kingdom have never expressed a desire to share the freedom of Great Britain, without at the same time declaring their determination to share her fate, standing or falling with the British nation.

Wm. Watts Gayer } Cler.
Edw. Gayer } Parliament.



*Copy of a Resolution of the House of Commons in
Ireland, Martis, 16^o die Aprilis, 1782.*

RESOLVED, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, to return His Majesty the thanks of this House for his most gracious message to this House, signified by his Grace the Lord Lieutenant. To assure His Majesty of our unshaken attachment to His Majesty's Person and Government, and of our lively sense of his Paternal Care, in thus taking the lead to administer content to His Majesty's subjects of Ireland; that thus encouraged by his royal interposition, we shall beg leave, with all duty and affection, to lay before His Majesty the causes of our discon-
tents

tents and jealousies : To assure His Majesty, that his subjects of Ireland are a free People ; that the Crown of Ireland is an Imperial Crown, inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great Britain, on which Connexion the interests and happiness of both Nations essentially depend ; but that the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct Kingdom, with a Parliament of her own, the sole Legislature thereof ; that there is no body of men competent to make Laws to bind this nation, except the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland, nor any other Parliament which hath any authority or power of any sort whatsoever in this country, save only the Parliament of Ireland : To assure His Majesty, that we humbly conceive, that in this Right the very Essence of our Liberties exist ; a Right which we, on the part of all the People of Ireland, do claim as their birth-right, and which we cannot yield but with our lives : To assure His Majesty, that we have seen with concern certain Claims advanced by the Parliament of Great Britain, in an act, intituled, An Act for the " better securing the Dependency of Ireland ; " an act containing matter entirely irreconcilable to the fundamental Rights of this Nation ; that

we consider this act, and the claims it advances, to be the great and principle cause of the discontents and jealousies in this Kingdom : To assure His Majesty, that His Majesty's Commons of Ireland do most sincerely wish, that all Bills which become Law in Ireland should receive the approbation of His Majesty, under the Seal of Great Britain ; but that yet we do consider the Practice of suppressing our Bills in the Council of Ireland, or altering the same any where, to be another just cause of discontent and jealousy : To assure His Majesty, that an Act, intituled, " An Act " for the better Accommodation of His Majesty's " Forces," being unlimited in duration, and defective in other instances (but passed in that shape from the particular circumstances of the times) is another just cause of discontent and jealousy in this Kingdom : That we have submitted these, the principal causes of the present discontent and jealousy in Ireland, and remain in humble expectation of redress ; that we have the greatest reliance on His Majesty's wisdom, the most sanguine expectations from his virtuous choice of a Chief Governor, and great confidence in the wise, auspicious, and constitutional councils which

which we see with satisfaction His Majesty has adopted; that we have moreover a high sense and veneration for the British character, and do therefore conceive, that the proceedings of this country, founded as they are in right, and tempered by duty, must have excited the approbation and esteem, instead of wounded the pride, of the British Nation; and we beg leave to assure His Majesty, that we are the more confirmed in this hope, inasmuch as the people of this Kingdom have never expressed a desire to share the freedom of England, without declaring a determination to share her fate likewise, standing and falling with the British nation.

THO. ELLIS, *Cler. Par. Dom. Com.*

ORDERED, That the said Copies do lie upon the Table, to be perused by the Members of the House.

17th May, 1782.

RESOLVED, That this House will, immediately, resolve itself into a Committee of the whole

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House,

House, to take into consideration His Majesty's most gracious Message, of the 9th Day of April last, relative to the State of Ireland.

ORDERED, That the several papers which were presented to the House, by Mr. Secretary Fox, upon the 1st day of this instant May, be referred to the said Committee.

Then the House resolved itself into the said Committee.

Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

Mr. Powys took the Chair of the Committee.

Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

Mr. Powys reported from the Committee, That they had come to several Resolutions; which they had directed him to report, when the House will please to receive the same.

ORDERED, That the Report be now received.

Mr

Mr. Powys accordingly reported, from the said Committee, the Resolutions which the Committee had directed him to report to the House, which he read in his place, and afterwards delivered in at the Clerk's table; where the same were read; and are as follows: *viz.*

RESOLVED, That it is the Opinion of this Committee, That an Act, made in the sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty King George the First, intituled, "An Act for the better securing the Dependency of the Kingdom of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain," ought to be repealed.

RESOLVED, that it is the Opinion of this Committee, That it is indispensible to the interests and happiness of both Kingdoms, that the Connexion between them should be established, by mutual consent, upon a solid and permanent Basis.

The said Resolutions, being severally read a second time, were, upon the Question severally put thereupon, agreed to by the House, *Nemini Contradicienti.*

ORDERED,

ORDERED, That leave be given to bring in a Bill for repealing an Act made in the sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty, King George the First, intituled "An Act for the better securing the Dependency of the Kingdom of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain;" and that Mr. Secretary Fox, Mr. Thomas Pitt, Mr. Powys, and Lord John Cavendish, do prepare and bring in the same.

RESOLVED, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, That His Majesty will be graciously pleased to take such measures as His Majesty in His Royal Wisdom shall think most conducive to the establishing, by mutual consent, the Connexion between this Kingdom and the Kingdom of Ireland upon a solid and permanent basis.

ORDERED, That the said Address be presented to His Majesty, by such Members of this House as are of His Majesty's most honourable Privy Council.

22d May,

22d *May*, 1782.

Mr. Secretary Fox reported to the House, That His Majesty had been attended with the Address of this House, of Friday last, which His Majesty had been pleased to receive very graciously ; and that His Majesty had commanded him to acquaint this House, that he will immediately take such measures as may be most likely to conduce to the establishment of a Connexion between this Kingdom and the Kingdom of Ireland upon a solid and permanent basis.



HOUSE OF COMMONS OF IRELAND.

August 12, 1785.*

—— *The Chancellor of the Exchequer* [Mr. FOSTER] said, he could not sit silent when he heard a measure in which he was proud to have had a considerable part, represented by so many gentlemen as injurious to the independence of the Irish legislature, and a barter of the constitution for commerce. He should think himself, indeed, unworthy of a seat in that House, or of the name of Irishman, if he could consent to barter an atom of the constitution of his country for all the commerce in the world; but he was so fully satisfied the present measure did not violate it, in the smallest degree, that he could not repress his surprise at its being supposed to do so. When gentlemen said, that it violated the constitution, they forgot that they had recorded a similar violation of it in every session, since the freedom of

* “That leave be given to bring in a Bill, for effectuating the intercourse and commerce between Great Britain and Ireland, on permanent and equitable principles, for the mutual benefit of both Kingdoms.”

their

their legislation had been established. His Right Hon. Friend (the Attorney General) had quoted the resolution of that House in 1779. He would now read a part of the statute of 1781, made in consequence of that resolution :

“ And whereas such part of the trade between this kingdom and the British Colonies in America, the West Indies, and British Settlements on the coast of Africa, as was not enjoyed by this kingdom, previous to the last session of Parliament, can be enjoyed and have continuance so long, and in such case only, as goods to be imported from the said Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements into this kingdom, or to be exported from this kingdom to the said Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements shall be liable to equal duties and drawbacks, and be subject to the same securities, regulations and restrictions as the like goods are liable and subject to, upon being imported from the said Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements into Great Britain, or exported from thence to such Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements respectively ; be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, for the advancement of the said trade, that duties, drawbacks, prohibitions, &c. be granted, &c.”

This statute passed at a time when the spirit of the nation was as high as ever it had been, and her jealousy of the constitution as great, and has been repeated every session since. Now, Sir, the condition as to regulating trade is as express in this statute as in the present bill. [Mr. Grattan

interrupting,

interrupting, desired to know what trade?]*—The Chancellor proceeded, the Plantation trade—the very trade now in agitation; and if accepting trade on conditions would destroy the constitution, our constitution has been long since destroyed, even in the very year of its emancipation. But the Right Hon. Gentleman acknowledges the condition which he inveighs against as being most dangerous now, to be similar to that one which he then and ever since has deemed so innocent. He only dwells on its extending to foreign trade, that is, to foreign colonies, as if the greater or less extent could change its constitutional or unconstitutional nature; but will Gentlemen consider the matter, stripped of all oratory and declamation? Great Britain has colonies, she offers full communication of her trade to Ireland, on conditions of Ireland trading on the same terms as she does herself; one of those terms is equal duties and regulations, which the gentlemen admit to be fair and harmless, for we have complied with it in part these two sessions; another of the terms is the giving a like protection, as Great Britain gives to their produce against the produce of foreign colonies. This too is fair, but it destroys*

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our constitution—what pitiful reasoning! It does not destroy us to receive a monopoly of their consumption; but to give them a monopoly of our consumption, annihilates our independence. No man of common sense can hesitate that it is fair we should receive the trade on the same terms as Britain. The Colonies are hers—she has a right to annex those terms. The trade with them is a gift from her, and the gift is conditional; she offers to take us into partnership in their trade; she, an old established country, raised by commerce alone to an height above any other European power, invites us to partake of the means that raised her to wealth and greatness, to a full and equal share in that trade which cost her millions to obtain and will cost her millions to preserve; and this she does without desiring any thing towards that cost, or for their maintenance, or any return, save a small share of what may arise from our profits in that new partnership. But when gentlemen argue on bad ground, even their own arguments often make against them, and an Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Flood) at the same time that he exerts all his eloquence to persuade us that the confining ourselves

ourselves to the British Colonies or accepting the trade on such conditions is injurious to the constitution, not only admits but contends, that we have done it already, and that we have done it on the solemn faith of compact. Hear his reasoning; he says, that the transaction of 1780 was a compact, and not a gift, and he says it was a compact, because we gave a consideration; three considerations, each of more value than the gift; we gave monopoly for monopoly, that is; in other words, we agree to prohibit the goods of other colonies, the very thing that is now held up as a surrender of legislature, and the fact is, we did, and still do prohibit, by heavy duties, the same as Britain pays, all foreign colony produce. In theory, therefore, we have agreed to what he now says cannot be agreed to without ruin, and in practice we have actually done the very thing without injury, if not with benefit to the trade. His other considerations are curious; we gave revenue, and that is, we received liberty to import an article, sugars, that would bear a considerable revenue, which we must have otherwise imposed, elsewhere, and thus he strangely construes the accepting the means of a revenue

revenue into giving one. His third consideration is still more wonderful; we gave loyalty. Good Heavens; in an Irish House of Commons does he say that we gave our duty to our Prince as a partner for a grant of trade?

Mr. *Flood* interrupted to say, that he had quoted the Resolution of the British Parliament, when he stated, that the loyalty of Ireland was deemed a consideration.

——— *The Chancellor of the Exchequer* resumed. To such wretched shifts are gentlemen driven, who attempt to support what is not supportable, and would vainly endeavour to persuade you that this measure trenches on the independence of our Legislature; you need not adopt any laws that Great Britain may pass for the regulation of commerce; if you do not approve them, you may reject them whenever you think proper; you do but reject the benefit of the condition, and return to the situation in which you now are; but the same Member has proved most strongly the necessity of introducing the Bill, for when such abilities as his can totally mis-
conceive

conceive its tendency, it ought to be introduced, in order to be fully understood. He has observed largely on each Proposition, and nothing was ever so mistated, misrepresented and misunderstood, as every part of them has been by him. It would be absurd to follow him through all his errors, many of them the most ignorant child would be ashamed to advance; but I will point out a few, not perhaps so obvious without examination.

Let me first take notice of his having alluded to me, and said, that I voted against a declaration of Rights. I deny it; I declared my opinion of the independence of our Legislature, from this very seat, early in the debate on that day; but did *he* vote for it? *He did not*, and I repeat the Hon. Gentleman did not vote for it, but lamented that the subject had been brought in that day.

—— I shall leave this subject as a lesson to the Hon. Gentleman, never for the future to charge facts that are unfounded. I shall now proceed to the Hon. Gentleman's observations.

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He says " mark the cunning with which the
 " resolutions are drawn, to the injury of Ire-
 " land ; there is no new prohibition to be allow-
 " ed on the import from one country to ano-
 " ther." This is certainly a great evil, especi-
 ally if we consider that the Exportation of Irish
 products to England amounts to TWO MILLIONS
 and an HALF annually—and the Exportation of
 British products to Ireland amount but to ONE
 MILLION, so it is injurious to a country which
 may by prohibition lose two millions and an
 half, to stipulate against prohibitions, and the
 country that sends more than she takes, is not
 wise in guarding against mutual prohibition.

Another discovery the Hon. Gentleman has
 made is that countervailing duties are unfair—why?
 Because the Brewery of Ireland will thereby be
 effectually protected. The Hon. Gentleman com-
 plains of the Report of the English Privy Coun-
 cil, who say that to put Ireland and England on
 a footing of exact reciprocity as to linen, Ire-
 land ought to give a bounty on the Exportation
 of English Linens, because England gives a
 bounty

bounty on the exportation of Irish Linens. Can any thing be more just? Yet England makes no such demand, but is ready by this adjustment to give additional security to our Linen trade for ever. If indeed the adjustment were to take away the benefit from Ireland, it would be a good cause for rejecting it; but as it for ever confirms all the advantages we derive from our Linen trade, and binds England from making any law that can be injurious to it; surely Gentlemen who regard that trade, and whose fortunes and rent depend on its prosperity, will not entertain a moment's doubt about embracing the offer.

Another of his curious objections is, that as we have not a navy of our own, and if we assist the navy of the empire, England will turn that navy to her own ambitious purposes. To what ambitious purposes? To the protection of that commerce, and of those colonies which are now to become ours.—In the moment that she gives up her monopoly of colonies, she is accused of ambitious purpose, for her separate aggrandizement.

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The Hon. Gentleman complains, that the Bill now before the English Parliament makes it necessary that every proper and authentic document to prevent smuggling should be sent by the revenue officers of this country with any foreign or plantation goods sent from hence to England, but that the same precaution is not taken with regard to the same kind of goods sent from England to Ireland. This is the strongest argument for waiting the introduction of the Irish Bill; it speaks the consciousness of the English Parliament, that they could not prescribe to our revenue officers what documents should be satisfactory to them on receiving goods from England, but that the Irish Parliament alone in their own Bill, could determine that matter. It shews the Hon. Gentleman to be totally ignorant of what either is or ought to be the substance of the Bill.

The Hon. Gentleman talks of bounties, and says, by abolishing bounties, we shall no longer be able to bring corn to this city; our inland corn bounties, he says, are to be turned into Protecting Duties for England. A strange conception! But why has he fixed on corn and flour?

If

If he had read the Resolution on which he is arguing, he would have seen that corn and flour are every where exempted.

Another argument of the Hon. Gentleman is, that the declaring that neither country hereafter can lay any new prohibition on native productions, implies cunningly that it may on foreign. What an argument! when the very first principles of the system is, that a mutual interchange of foreign commodities is for ever to take place between the two kingdoms, and one even of the Twenty Propositions declares it in precise terms—But, the Hon. Gentleman talks of prohibitions on exports, &c. Would the Hon. Gentleman wish to leave it in the power of either nation to prohibit their native commodities from being exported to the other? would he wish to leave it in the power of England to prohibit the exportation of coals, salt, iron, bark, hops, and many other articles, or to raise a revenue on these articles when exported hither.

The Hon. Gentleman talks particularly of wool. I admit, if you balance wool against wool, that
his

his argument is right; but the just way is to balance the whole of the exports;—England engages never to prohibit the export of articles which are necessary almost to our existence, and we engage not to prohibit the export of articles which bring us in 500,000*l.* a year. We are to engage not to prohibit the export of Woollen and Linen Yarn, which we have exported for a whole century, and without keeping a market for the redundancy of which by export, we could *not* ensure plenty for own manufactures.

The Gentleman too totally mistakes the case of patents and copy-rights. British patents and copy-rights are protected in Britain by prohibition against import. The Resolutions say to us, “protect your’s in like manner;” a measure never yet adopted here, which must promote genius, printing, and invention in Ireland.

I am ashamed, Sir, of taking up so much of your time on a subject which might be so easily understood by the lowest capacity; I shall therefore quit the Hon. Gentleman and come to the question of constitution, which I do not at all
think

think involved in this subject. If Great Britain grants us a full partnership in all her trade, in all her colonies, if she admits us to a full participation in the benefits of her Navigation laws, by which she has raised herself to the greatest commercial power in the world; if she does not call upon us to contribute to the expence of the partnership, but merely to receive our share of the profits, and says, we may continue in that partnership only so long as we chuse, can any man say, the conditions of it amount to a surrender of our legislature? surely not, it is idle speculation. Let us then look at the subject, free from all imaginary dread for the constitution.

Britain imports annually from us 2,500,000*l.* of our products, all, or very nearly all, duty free, and covenants never to lay a duty on them. We import about a 1,000,000*l.* of hers, and raise a revenue on almost every article of it, and reserve the power of continuing that revenue. She exports to us salt for our fisheries and provisions; hops which we cannot grow; coals which we cannot raise; tin which we have not; and bark which we cannot get elsewhere; and all these without reserving

reserving any duty; or a power to impose any on them; though her own subjects pay 2, 3, or 4s. a chaldron for her own coals, sent coastways, and in London 7s. We on the contrary charge a duty for our own use here on almost every article we send to her. So much for exports; now as to bounties, she almost ruined our manufacture of sail-cloth, by bounties on export of her own to Ireland. In 1750, or thereabouts, when her bounty commenced, we exported more than we imported, and in 1784, we exported none, and imported 180,000 yards; she now withdraws that bounty. And let me digress here a little on sail-cloth, which although gentlemen affect to despise when mentioned, will, I trust, be an immediate source of wealth by this adjustment. For 1. This bounty is to be removed. 2. The export of sail-cloth to the Indies is to be allowed, and Great Britain exported there, in 1782, about 200,000 ells. 3. There is a British law, obliging every British and colony ship to have its first suits of British sail-cloth. Irish now is to be deemed British. 4. There is a preference of 2d. an ell given by British law to British sail-cloth, over foreign, for the British navy. Irish is now to have the same

same preference. 5. The surplus of the hereditary revenue is to be applied in the first place to the purchase of Irish sail-cloth. All these give a glorious prospect for that valuable manufacture—But to return, were a man to look for the country most advantageous to settle manufacture in, what would be his choice? One where labour and provisions are cheap, that is Ireland; and what he would next look for?—why to have a rich, extended and steady market near him, which England, stretched along-side affords, and to establish that market for this country is one great object of this system. Gentlemen undervalue the reduction of British duties on our manufactures; I agree with them it may not operate soon, but we are to look forward in a final settlement, and it is impossible but that in time, with as good climate, equal natural powers, cheaper food, and fewer taxes, we must be able to sell to them. When commercial jealousy shall be banished by final settlement, and trade take its natural and steady course, the kingdoms will cease to look to rivalry, each will make that fabric which it can do cheapest, and buy from the other what it cannot make so advantageously. Labour will

be then truly employed to profit, not diverted by duties, bounties, jealousies or legislative interference from its natural and beneficial course, this system will attain its real object, consolidating the strength of the remaining parts of the empire, by encouraging the communications of their market among themselves, with preference to every part against all strangers.

I need not mention the Navigation Act, the proper benefits of which we have so long looked for ; I will only observe, that Great Britain could never agree to receive the British Colonies' goods from us, unless we prohibited the goods of foreign Colonies as she does, which is a powerful argument for that part of the system against the constitutional phrensy that threatens it. Let us also observe, that now, for the first time, Great Britain offers us a right for ever in all present and future Colonies, without any reservation of power, to call on us either to procure, support, or preserve them; *she* maintains them, *we* share all the profits ; and not only their goods, but all goods of Irish produce, are to pass through Britain duty free. Can foreign

reign nations, after this is settled, make distinction between British and Irish goods? Our manufactures will be united as our interests, and we shall laugh at Portugal folly.

I could run out for hours into the many benefits of this system but I have tired the House too long; let me only implore you not to reject this measure, for ill-founded, visionary objections, or to sacrifice realities to shadows. If this infatuated country gives up the present offer, she may look for it again in vain; things cannot remain as they are; commercial jealousy is roused, it will increase with two independent legislatures, if they don't mutually declare the principles whereby their powers shall be separately employed, in directing the common concerns of trade; and without an united interest of commerce, in a commercial empire, political union will receive many shocks, and separation of interest must threaten separation of connexion, which every honest Irishman must shudder ever to look at as a possible event.

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I will only add, that if this measure be refused, Ireland will receive more solid injury than from any other evil that ever befel her; it is in vain for Gentlemen to think we can go on as we have done for some years—or to expect to cope with England in a destructive war of bounties—our situation must every day become more difficult, and it is impossible to foresee all the ruinous consequences that may ensue. — — —

AUGUST 15th, 1785,

Right Hon. *Chancellor of the Exchequer* [Mr. FOSTER] I rise to state the misconception of the Right Hon. Gentleman, and if any thing can shew the necessity of curing the people of their infatuation, by publishing and explaining the Bill to them, it surely is this, that a Gentleman to whom they look up, and justly look, as one whose wisdom and virtue will guard their rights, is so very much mistaken.

The Right Hon. Gentleman in his argument has never once adverted to the Bill on your table,
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but draws all his conclusions from arguments raised by his own imagination, on the British Resolutions. He dwells now only on foreign Colony trade and Navigation laws; the accepting a full participation of the British Colony trade, upon terms of equal laws, he gives up as not altering our constitution, and he even agrees in the innocence of our declaring it as a principle of the treaty. In this he has shewn his wisdom, for it is already declared in the law of Ireland. The objection then stands as to a foreign Colony trade, and what says the Bill, it declares it to be a condition of the treaty, to protect that trade, in the same manner as Britain does, against the interference of foreign Colony goods. It enacts nothing, and there is the mighty evil which we have introduced, that is to give Britain the regulation of all our foreign trade with Portugal, with Spain, with all the world. If the Gentleman so egregiously mistakes the purport of what he has not read, I trust the good sense of the nation will see his mistakes and judge for themselves; but the objections to an agreement of rating only the goods from foreign Colonies, so far only as by protecting our Colonies against them,

them, is not so wonderful from him as his objection to the Bill's affecting Navigation and British seamen in general; from him I say, for in the year 1782 the Right Hon. Gentleman introduced in conjunction with the late Chief Baron Burgh, and the present Chief Baron Yelverton, a Bill, adopting in the gross all such clauses and provisions of the laws theretofore passed in England, as conveyed equal benefits and imposed equal restrictions in commerce, in the most extended sense, to the subjects of both countries, and also putting the seamen of Ireland on the footing of British seamen. [*The Chancellor here read the words.*] The Bill now brought in does not go so far; he went to commerce in general, and adopted laws without reference to them, or even reciting their title. What does this Bill do? it declares with him the principle; it does no more. This Bill declares for a *similarity of laws, manners, and customs*, in toto. Our Bill declares for a similarity of Navigation Laws, on our accepting the benefit of the British, not for the first time offered to us. It is idle to believe, even his authority can have weight in such unfounded objections: nay, *our* Bill reaches *his*,
to

to adopt its principles, and he says our is mischievous; his was the glory of the nation and the joint labour of the greatest friends of liberty.

The Right Hon. Gentleman says, " we might
 " have foreign trade, without entering into the
 " measure, and that England, as to foreign
 " trade, gives us no right which we already have
 " not." As to Colony Trade, he says, " she
 " gives us what we had before, on the former
 " conditions, that we give her Colony product a
 " preference in our market, and therefore, he
 " says, cannot we remain as we now are."

With respect to the Colony Trade, I answer, we hold it by the gift of Britain, and she may repeal her act, and reassume her monopoly. As to Foreign Trade, I have shewn it is no way affected, except by the preference to be given to British Colony goods, against those of Foreign Colonies; but why does the Gentleman allude to Portugal? it is the strongest measure against him. Portugal has presumed to distinguish between the goods of Great Britain and the goods of Ireland
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— she will not receive the latter. But if this settlement is entered into, all our goods she can have may go duty free through Britain. The distinction between British and Irish manufacture is lost as to Foreign Nations, our goods, are made one, physically as well as politically, in respect to foreign, and our Union cemented by the freedom of intercourse.

The honourable gentleman seems, with others, to undervalue the British markets for our linens, and that if Britain shall discourage her import, they will find vent elsewhere, I will not pay him so fulsome a compliment as to say he understands commerce, his genius soars perhaps above such reading; but if he did understand it, I would ask him, where would he expect a market to favour the linens of Ireland? Where will he find a market under Heaven for that manufacture, which now brings two millions annually into the kingdom? Will Portugal take them? Will Spain take them? Will France take them? No; we know they will not. Will Russia, Germany, or Holland take them? They are your powerful rivals, and able to undersel you. Where then will

will you find a market, if England shuts her ports? Will you go to the West Indies?—you cannot go to the English Colonies—they will be like Britain—there you can have no admittance. The French, Spanish, and Portuguese have shut their ports long since—your only market then is in the *bankrupt* States of North America, that have not money to pay their just debts, and many provinces of which, if they had the money, have not perhaps the honesty to do it.

This bankrupt country is to give you the market Britain affords. No, no; cherish the market you have, you will never get so good, she ever exports with bounty for you. And here let me observe the benefits of exporting, duty free, all our fabrics through her ports, which this settlement secures. You first found the way for your linens to foreign places through her ports, by her capitals and extent of dealing;—do not refuse the like for your other fabrics—the prosperity of the linen should teach you.

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The gentleman says England is as dependant on Ireland as Ireland is on England for her products—he instances the cotton yarn and other yarn of Ireland. What, call cotton yarn a fabric of Ireland, and an export to Britain!—It is a mistake of his expression, he cannot be so ignorant of our manufactures. Let us look into the wants Britain supplies—I will take coals first.

Do you think it an object of no consequence to receive coals from England, for ever, duty free while, the duties on coals in England, brought from one of her own ports to another is very high. I remember when I proposed a shilling a ton on the importation of coals into Dublin only, in order to raise a fund for extending and beautifying the city, it met with great opposition; I was abused in all the news papers; yet now England may raise four times that sum upon the export of her coals, which will fall upon the consumer, and raise a revenue for her advantage; nay were she even to raise the revenue on them to you that she does on her own coast carriage, what would become of you? You have

have not Irish coal ; if the present bounty of 2s. a ton to Dublin, added to 1s. 8d. duty on British, which operates as 3s. 8d. in favour of Irish coal, what will you do ; because no carriage can be so cheap to you as that across the channel. Rock salt is the next ; — Where will you get it ? (some one said from Spain) Rock salt from Spain ! The gentleman should inform himself a little better.

As to the tanning trade, where will you get bark ? From no place in the world but England. We know that it would not bear the freight from any other, and if England was to prohibit the export of it, that trade must be at an end ; and we must not forget, that the British manufacturers of leather have already complained, that by getting bark from Wales, we are enabled to work on as good terms as England.

Let him look to hops ; will this country grow them ? On the other hand, what wants do we supply for England ? wool and linen yarn, to our own great advantage ; but it is in vain to proceed ; the House must see that we are talking of a subject not yet understood ; when known, and Ire-
land

land unprejudiced and in her calm reason, will never reject the many blessings it holds out to her trade;—it gives wealth and security which I trust will never be refused from a wild imagination of Utopian Republics, Commonwealths, Monarchies—God knows what.

I will stand or fall with the Bill, that not a line in it touches your Constitution; it is now left to the decision of the country, it is not abandoned, God forbid it should; and I trust I shall see the nation ask it at our hands, that we may be able then to obtain it shall be my prayers—the Minister cannot promise—he has done his duty—and it will be my pride at a future day, when its real value shall be known, that I bore a leading share in the transaction—that I laboured to procure for Ireland solid and substantial benefits, which even two years ago no man had an idea of even looking to.



S P E E C H

OF

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN, Esq. *K*

IN THE

House of Commons of Great Britain,

ON

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31ST, 1799,

IN

REPLY TO MR. PITT'S SPEECH

ON THE

UNION WITH IRELAND.

D U B L I N :

PRINTED FOR JAMES MOORE, NO. 45, COLLEGE-GREEN.

1799.

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S P E E C H, &c.

NO common question arrests the serious attention of this House.—I have listened, Mr. Speaker, with more than usual attention to the Speech of the Rt. Hon. Gentleman—and much as I am disposed to admire, much as I believe the House may be induced to approve of, the very eloquent harangue which has been just now delivered, yet I trust that I need not remind it, that there are some questions of a nature so serious and delicate, which strike home so immediately to our dearest interests, that it is peculiarly important that we should be particularly suspicious of the more than ordinary display of mental exertion, and jealous of that unworthily directed eloquence, that would surprize our approbation to a measure replete with injury and insult to Ireland, and, in my opinion, with ruin to the British empire. We have long stood in the most trying and difficult situation, but that crisis, I think, has now arrived, when it becomes every Gentleman seriously to catechise his heart, before he is led by the eloquence and abilities of the Hon. Chancellor of the Exchequer, to do that which he might in his sober judgment reflect upon with pain, and perhaps have reason to repent the rest of his life. I consider the House, at this moment, in that situation in which it becomes my duty

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to

to apprise them of the danger of listening to the specious arguments by which their minds are attempted to be influenced. I took the liberty, last week, of stating to the House, that whether Government thought an Union was essential to the prosperity of Ireland, or necessary to the salvation of both countries, whether the plan by which the Union was to be effected was approved or disapproved, yet that in the present crisis of the affairs of that Country, and under all circumstances as applicable to both, the measure was one which was by no means advisable. It happened the majority of the House differed from my sentiments; yet I may venture to assert, that excepting the Right Hon. Gentleman, and one or two more whose opinions usually coincide with his, there is not one Gentleman, now in the House, who does not from his heart regret that such a measure was ever brought forward in Ireland. The manner in which it has been met in that kingdom, is in my mind an additional reason of regret that such a measure should still be obstinately persevered in in this. It is to be regretted that the Right Hon. Gentleman should, when the question was last week before the House, have expressed himself in so decided a manner. He, unfortunately, and most unwisely, pledged himself that he would make the measure of an Union between this country and Ireland a favourite object; he distinctly stated that it was a measure from which no opposition in this House, or in the House of Commons in Ireland, no loss of popularity, no consideration of the offence which he might give those friends he valued most, should deter him from endeavouring to carry into execution. He has this day, though not quite in such unqualified terms, repeated that pledge;—but though he has repeated it, the House has not repeated it; and I conjure every Gentleman in the House, that he will not only refuse by his vote this night to sanction

sanction such a pledge, but that he will give his vote in such way as to preclude the hope of its being brought forward on any future time. The Right Hon. Gentleman, by this proposed measure of an Union, has placed Ireland and England in a very awkward and perilous situation. The two countries are in that peculiar situation, that it must appear evident to every one the Independance of Ireland, and the power of the Right Hon. Gentleman to destroy it, are incapable of existing together. He has shewn that one or the other must be annihilated; that they cannot co-exist, unless indeed the House in its wisdom shall interpose, and convince him that it will not suffer him to use his power to the destruction of that Country. He has, by this measure, promoted discord and dissension between the two countries, at a time when union and co-operation were above all things necessary; he has been the means of planting the seeds of discord and dissension between the Houses of Lords and Commons in Ireland; he has traduced the Parliament, as an assembly convicted of being the dupes of an English faction. There remains but one thing more for him to do, which is to raise the British House of Commons against the House of Commons in Ireland. This, however, he has not, and I trust he never will be able to effect; and I hope, sincerely hope, that the British Nation would rather that that Gentleman was plunged in the abyss of public odium, national execration and unrelenting hatred, than that by any wild, desperate, daring and impolitic measure, he should be permitted to alienate the affection of one country from the other, or strike at the political consequence or commercial prosperity of our dear, valued, faithful, brave and generous sister kingdom. Oh God! Sir, why is it that I interpose between the system of that Right Hon. Gentleman, and the adoption of it on the part of this House? because, Sir, it is a system which

which is calculated to promote discord, and an inveterate alternation of disgust and antipathy, when union and affection should be conciliated and confirmed; it is because it is a system which must as sure as effect follows cause, promote disgust and resentment; it is because it is a system which traduces one of the contracting parties as so low, so desperate, and so degraded; as in energy incapable to retrieve the Country from the calamities under which it has laboured; and in mind so weak, so pusillanimous, so unenlightened; such a shame and scandal to the nation over which it presides, as to be the continual dupe of every paltry, despicable British faction; a system, in one word, which is now endeavouring to array the British House of Commons against the Representative Assembly, of our dear and justly valued sister kingdom.

I frankly and honestly declare, that by far the greatest part of that Right Hon. Gentleman's speech was in no shape connected with the question which he was pleased to introduce. For near an hour of the time which he occupied the House, I was inclined to suppose, (if such a supposition was allowable) either that a stranger had got into the House, and the Hon. Gentleman was replying to some speech which he had delivered in some other assembly, or that the Right Hon. Gentleman in the warmth of his imagination, had fancied himself in the Irish House of Commons, and was warmly engaged to (what by the bye I did not conceive him, adequate on the present occasion) a reply to Mr. Foster, on a subject which was deeply connected with the vital interests of that much injured, but rapidly advancing young Country. Not one part of his argument relates to the question—he is proposing a measure by which the rights of an independant nation are to be destroyed and trampled upon; and he thinks he triumphs by endeavouring to shew that the arguments

ments of Mr. Foster are unfounded. The whole of his argument is, that Mr. Foster thought the propositions in 1785 necessary to prevent future jealousy and suspicion between the two countries; and the Hon Gentleman thought if the propositions failed, he would be considered a useless Minister. What is to be collected from this, but that both Mr. Foster and the Hon. Gentleman sustained foolish opinions? for it turned out, that although the propositions did fail, the failure was not the means of introducing jealousy and suspicion between the two countries, nor of producing the resignation of the Honourable Gentleman. If, indeed, he can shew that the failure of the propositions had produced all those disasters which have since happened; all those scenes of distraction and rebellion which the kingdom of Ireland has witnessed; then I admit the argument would be against Mr. Foster; but has he shewn that to have been the case? On the contrary, the argument relative to Mr. Foster stands simply thus: Mr. Foster said, the failure of the Commercial Propositions would be the ground of future jealousy and suspicion on the part of Ireland. Well! what is the consequence? He now says, "though I did say so, I find I was mistaken; for it appears to have been the best means of preserving its independance." Sir, there does not strike me the slightest inconsistency in the present sentiments of Mr. Foster on the question, with reference to those he formerly entertained; and the arguments of the Right Hon. Gentleman seem to me to consist in a sort of repartee unworthy his good sense and abilities.

But though the Right Hon. Gentleman may not have succeeded in fixing the charge of inconsistency on Mr. Foster, yet the tendency of his speech has fully developed the system of foul and rank corruption and intimidation by which it seems the
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measure is or was to be carried : Does it not throw out an ignominious threat of withdrawing such commercial advantages as Ireland may derive from her connexion with Great Britain, unless she basely consents to strengthen that connexion, by the plausible and specious mode, which is now so cruelly suggested,—the surrender of her independence,—and proclaims to an astonished world,—her disposition to become a province ; though from the earliest æra of modern Europe to this day, she has had the strength, capability, and power, to retain the character and consequence of a distinct and separate kingdom from Great Britain. Are not the expressions which we have heard this night an insinuated threat to those who look upon a Legislative independance of Ireland necessary to the continuance of her present prosperity ? for what end could such scandalous and disgraceful threats be resorted to, but as the means of intimidation ? this is fully corroborated by what follows the taunting observations of the Right Hon. Gentleman ;—observations that evince little respect—nay an utter contempt—either for the Parliament, or the People of Ireland :—Ireland, he says, ought at this moment to spurn the nature of her present situation, and be particularly desirous of embracing the offer of closer Union :—And why ?—Because such forsooth is her weakness, that she is incapable of defending herself, and must therefore rely on the protection of her powerful neighbour to defend her. What was this but calling on a wretched, distressed, impoverished Irishman, to surrender every thing dear, and valued, and worth defending, for the privilege of being defended, and when defence would be an object of trifling estimation ? What is this but to state that our protection is to be withdrawn, if she refuses to accede to what is proposed ? (No, no, exclaimed several Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench). I repeat that it is the fair and natural inference—

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ference—he says, that Ireland is incapable of defending herself without our connexion, and that our connexion cannot exist without an Union—can any other inference be drawn from such a mode of reasoning, than that if Ireland refuses the Union, she will be deprived of the protection of this country? But is this language fit and proper to be held out? If two countries stand in that relation to each other, that with respect to the one it has no trade, no commerce, no manufactures, no advantage of its own, nothing in fact but what it derives from the other, that it is in a situation in which it is incapable of defending itself without the assistance of its powerful neighbour, is it not natural to ask, How it came into that situation? and may I not ask, How Ireland is in the situation described by the Honourable Gentleman? a country blessed with all the advantages which God and Nature ever bestowed, a healthy climate, commodious ports, and a fruitful soil. Is it, let me ask, wise in the Hon. Gentleman to press such a discussion; and to afford Ireland the opportunity of inquiring how it has happened she is not in possession of those advantages which naturally belong to her; and by the enquiry to learn, that it has been owing to the oppressive, unwise, injurious policy of Great Britain, for a period of near three hundred years? The Hon. Gentleman says he considers the connexion between the two countries necessary to each other, and that England is little qualified to do without Ireland; yet he brings forward a discussion which leads to that hostility, that may destroy the existence of both. With regard to the question of the power of Ireland to resist her enemies, let me ask the Hon. Gentleman, what inducement he could have for offering the insult he has to that country? When Ireland had her Volunteers in arms, had she not the means of repelling her foes foreign and domestic? What assistance

assistance did she not afford this country during the American war? Cannot Ireland say to you, before she suffers you to reproach her with her inability to defend herself, before she suffers you to reproach her with your 40,000 militia in the heart of the kingdom (for which you have my thanks), could she not say, give me back the 100,000 Irishmen who have lost their lives in fighting your battles? Above 10,000 of her sons have perished in the West Indies alone, in supporting your contests, yet you now say to her, you have weakened yourself, you are at our mercy, and therefore we insist upon your coalescing with us. But now the Hon. Gentleman contends that her weakness not only leaves her exposed to hostile invasion, but he also seems to feel that the same weakness leaves her at his mercy, and therefore, he will avail himself of it, to compel her to acquiesce in an Union. While this, however, most undoubtedly appears to be his real intention, he talks of leaving her adoption of the measure to the unbiassed and calm deliberation of her own independent Parliament. Was not this an insulting mockery? Such, at least, it must be deemed by men who regard not the words of the Right Hon. Gentleman, but who look at his actions for their true interpretation and import; and when I reflect upon the whole of his past conduct, can I believe that this question is to be left solely to the unbiassed judgment, to the independant discretion of the Irish Parliament? Surely not: and therefore I most seriously appeal to the good sense and the high dignity of the House, not to lend the sanction of its authority to the shameful means by which this measure is to be forced upon the reluctant feelings of the sister kingdom. And what, in the name of God, are those means? Do we not see in the foremost rank of them a barefaced and staring corruption, that stalks along the land with a purse in one hand

and a scourge in the other? Do we not see intimidation exerting its discouraging power in the sudden and scandalous dismissals of the oldest and best tried servants of the Crown, in the removal of a Parnell and of a Fitzgerald? And after this shall we still be told that the adoption of the proposed measure is wholly left to the calm judgment and independant discretion of the People of Ireland? Or rather, must it not be allowed that the whole of this imperious and threatening conduct on the part of Ministers is a lesson and a warning held out to the Irish Parliament to enforce their assent, or perhaps to hang over them the terrors of a Dissolution, or shew what those who still remain in place may expect from the examples of the punishment that has already been inflicted on some of the fairest and most distinguished characters in Ireland, unless they sacrifice the dictates of their duty and their conscience to the intemperate imperiousness of an headstrong Minister? The same stretch of insulting power might perhaps also be resorted to here, if any Gentleman now in office should venture to consult his Conscience and the Constitution, and espouse the opinion I propose; the fate of such a person most undoubtedly would be, to be turned out to-morrow; for we have been frequently told how important and necessary it is to repress and punish first symptom of insubordination and insurrection.

But conceiving, as I do, that the House is not free from the influence ever attained over easy tempers by bold and ingenious sophistry, apprehensive that we are in the situation of men who just begin to free themselves, by a collected vigorous effort, from the chains imposed by beauty, or the seductive allurements of an amorous sportive imagination, I must adjure the House not to dispose of a question that is perhaps to decide for ever whether a great and generous nation is to retain its inde-

pendance, and by implication, to determine whether a set of Representatives chosen by a free People, must vote themselves out of existence, and give up the liberties, the property, the acknowledged constitutional rights of their Constituents, to the domination of a power, that, under the mask of friendship, has introduced among them a force, originally said to be intended solely for their defence against a daring insidious enemy, whom all deprecate, but who is not more to be detested than the pretended friend who assists only that he may acquire confidence enough to delude, and strength enough to destroy.

I must think the House has been hurried along by the Right Hon. Gentleman from one degree of transport to another, until, in the groves of his Elysium, they have been elated with scenes of grandeur, and fatigued with that variety, or enfeebled with that richness of prospect, which is to render enquiry loathsome, and which will inevitably prepare the human mind for the reception of any doctrines, however wild—and any assurance of future advantage, however illusory. I took an opportunity last week of opposing the measure of Legislative Union with Ireland, in the first stage of the discussion, which, as matter of course, was to lead to that question. I did so then, as well from a conviction that measures of such magnitude, and of such novelty, should always be opposed in the infancy of their progress, as in the contemplation of what I naturally anticipated would be the effect of the eloquence of the Right Hon. Gentleman. I then said, what I am at this moment prepared to repeat, after much considering the subject, that under the present circumstances of Ireland, in this crisis of her convulsed and necessarily disordered system of polity and general government, it is not only impolitic but unsafe to urge, nay even to agitate

agitate the discussion of topics, in the issues of which are to be seen developing themselves, the poison and the horrors, which are to lay the most hardy and stout of heart prostrate at the feet of a British Minister—that are to intimidate and appal the most heroic spirits. Ireland, in her present temper, must be beat into this measure, and that Minister who shall make the bold experiment of flogging a whole nation into stupid beings, insensible alike to the duty she may owe herself, insensible to the rights of the present generation, and the interests of the race yet unborn, as much as to the arrogance and cupidity of those who shall inflict the blow, or direct the torture—such a Minister have secured his minions, but it may not be altogether unbecoming him, if he be desirous ultimately to prevail, to measure his power by the force of his antagonists', and in the estimation of his means of victory, to seek an antidote against national pride and local attachments.

Gracious God! Sir, Who would have supposed that a British Minister, wrapped up in the insolence of power, and that odious self-sufficiency, the genuine characteristic of a narrow and impotent understanding, rather than of a manly and vigorous intellect, would dare in the face of the Irish Nation, to spurn the assertion of her rights, to fawn and flatter her guiltless mind, and by seeming to respect her declared unequivocal opinion, to lull her into inactivity, the more successfully to enslave her for ever? But let not the Right Hon. Gentleman deceive himself whilst he is exerting his ingenuity to deceive Ireland. Let him remember, Sir, that some plots have been so closely wrought, some measures of surprise and delusion so intricately planned, and attempted to be carried into effect with such novelty of means, that the authors, the actors, even the subordinate characters in the drama, have been themselves

selves entangled in the mazes they have contrived for innocence, and overwhelmed under the ruins of that fabric, which they have erected to overawe the independant.

The Hon. Gentleman set out with saying, he wished the question to be argued coolly and dispassionately, distinctly expressing himself, that he wished to submit it to the unbiaſſed judgment and independant diſcuſſion of the Parliament of Ireland; but, Sir, I pay very little attention to the Hon. Gentleman's words, I look to his actions; and referring to them, let me ask, Is the question left to the unbiaſſed judgment and independant diſcuſſion of Ireland? Is it not on the contrary apparent, that in order to carry it, corruption is ſtalking through Ireland with a ſcourge in one hand and a purſe in the other? Is that, I ask, leaving it to the unbiaſſed judgment and independant diſcuſſion of the Country? It is the contrary; it is not only a mockery, but an inſult to Parliament. Beſides, how can Parliament tell, how ſoon the Hon. Gentleman may adopt the ſame line of conduct, with regard to the Parliament collectively, as he has done with reſpect to individuals? If he has diſmiſſed individuals for expreſſing ſentiments different to his own, may he not, by the ſame rule, diſmiſs the Parliament too, if it preſumes to oppoſe him. The inference is fair. Was it juſt, in the caſe of a Viceroy conſulting his conſcience, on a queſtion of all others the moſt neceſſary, to act according to its dictates, was it, I ſay, neceſſary to tell him, becauſe he did ſo, he was unfit to be any longer in his Maſteſty's ſervice? He ſays, that time ſhould be given to the people, as well in as out of Parliament, to conſider the ſubject, and for heats and animoſities to ſubſide. I believe, that with reſpect to the Irish Parliament, his intention is, that time ſhould be given to try the effect of further corruption; and what ſenſation will be produced by

by dismissing the Servants of the Crown; what the influence of the Crown is; and what are the expectations of those devoted to its services.—Nor was it the Right. Hon. Gentleman alone who attempted to justify these measures. I have heard them also justified by an Hon. Friend (Mr. Canning) and never did I hear any thing with more poignant regret; for what sensation but that of sorrow and regret could arise in my mind, when I heard that Hon. Friend plead the cause of bold and barefaced corruption, and thus cloud and contaminate with its foul fog and baneful breath the pure early morning of his political life? Would he now tell us that the Right Hon. Gentleman had given a determined pledge, and could not now recede? Why did he? Who called upon him to speak? Was it to encourage his friends in Ireland by a display of his resolution?—but that was unavailing, as the discussion and decision took place there before that encouragement could reach them; but as to the charge of urging intimidation, neither the Right Hon. Gentlemen, nor his Hon. Friend who answered me on a former occasion, had thought proper to say a word. His Hon. Friend (Mr. Canning,) from his Parliamentary standing, could not, indeed, have taken any part in the violation of the compact in 1782, and therefore his Right Hon. Friend stepped generously forward and claimed all the shame, guilt, and treachery of it to himself.—Like another *Nisus* he threw his broad shield over his beloved *Euryalus* to protect him from the vengeful resentment of the Irish nation, calling out to them—*Me, me, I, I am the man; wreak all your vengeance upon me.*

*Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum,
O Rutuli; mea fraus omnis; nihil iste nec ausus,
Nec potuit—*

My Hon. Friend's abilities might, however, prove that *potuit*; and as to his courage, he was satisfied the House had no reason to call it in question.—The
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generous ardour of the Right Hon. Gentleman to protect his Hon. Friend, was therefore only the impulse of affection.

Tantum infelicem nimium dilexit amicum.

Then, with respect to the rejection of the question by the Parliament of Ireland, the Hon. Gentleman says the measure is necessary to the people of Ireland; and at the conclusion of his observation he adds, that he will wait a more favourable opportunity. What does he mean? That he will wait till the Parliament of Ireland is convinced by reasoning? No, he will wait till a day or an hour of additional weakness, when the country shall be still further incapacitated for resisting their enemies, and more intimidated at the consequence of our withdrawing our assistance. What does he mean by saying he will wait? Does he mean he will wait till a period, as one which may or may not arrive, when he knows he has it in his power to create it whenever he thinks proper? It seems the Hon. Gentleman has now been fifteen years with this system of an Union rankling in his heart, but has never thought proper to bring it forward till the present moment.—What conclusion will the people of Ireland draw from such conduct? Have they not a right to suppose, if the measure was never proposed in the hour of their strength and prosperity, but is attempted when they are weakened and unable to resist, that it is not intended as a measure of advantage to them? If when a Lord Lieutenant was sent over to heal the differences respecting the Catholics; if when the cup was at their lips, it was dashed away, and that Lord Lieutenant withdrawn; if the hostilities of the Catholics and the Protestants were not necessary for him to attend to, what must they consider of his conduct when he attempts to introduce an alteration at a time when their weakness prevents them from resisting it? Does he think that he will by such a measure,

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so carried into effect, produce a permanent connexion between the two countries? Does he not consider what will be the feelings of men so provoked?—But is this the real argument of one who wields the power of national will? When we have already pledged ourselves to support that independant legislation which Ireland claimed as its right, what reason have we to suppose that if we attempt to destroy that pledge, we shall not drive that country to the expedient of gaining assistance, and repelling our attacks? The Hon. Gentleman treated the pledge of this House and the Government, at the last Adjustment in 1782, as a circumstance of a silly and trifling nature. Among other terms of scorn and opprobrium he calls it most childish; at the time he made this assertion he was not arrived at his full experience; he had been but a year and an half in office; but I should like to know what the conduct of the Hon. Gentleman's present colleagues had previously been? He reviles the Duke of Portland and the other Ministers who were then in power. There was a Gentleman, now a Noble Lord, I can't remember all the new Noble Lord's names, but he was considered the mouth-piece of those who carried that business into execution. He brought up the resolutions, and it will be found they passed *nemine contradicente*. Surely, the Hon. Gentleman will plead his tender years at the time, for not remembering this, for it was much about the time when he had the application of Heaven-born Minister bestowed upon him; but he says the resolutions were considered as childish, because there was one tacked to them which stated, that it was necessary to do something further. It is quite enough for me to know that there could not be any fraud intended by this last resolution; that it could not be considered as a *caveat* against that admission of the independance of Ireland which had been before acknowledged.

Ireland

Ireland says, " We will have an independant Parliament—Right—but to defeat that, we will put in the journals what shall have the effect of defeating the claim. I am persuaded it is impossible such a hard construction can be put upon that resolution. It is libellous to suppose that any one could mean it in that light. But I will tell you, Sir, to what the resolution alluded :—It was meant that with regard to commerce between the two countries, something further should be done ; but as to the Constitution of Ireland and its Independance, that was finally adjusted. It was supposed, that on the subject of commerce something might arise which it might be necessary afterwards to refer to the arbitration of Parliament. But why was not the Hon. Gentleman's opinion followed up? Why did he adhere to this silly pledge? I believe in the very next year, 1783, when this subject was again brought forward by Mr. Flood, the Hon. Gentleman did not think of saying there was something more to be done ; though he must be now supposed to have been convinced that something further was necessary, yet he did not intimate that opinion ; but now, at the distance of fifteen years, he states there is a necessity for following it up. Why has he so long delayed? Because he never before thought he had a favourable opportunity ; because he never before thought Ireland was at his mercy ; and now, as the means of carrying his system into effect, he must look forward to those feuds and discords which may weaken Ireland, and lay her still more at his mercy. With his usual lofty tone and carriage he again and again repeats, that an Union is the only remedy that can heal the evils that afflict Ireland, or that can secure the salvation of both countries. He must, therefore, persist in it, and call on Parliament to assist him in the execution of the measure ; he is willing, however, to wait for a more favourable opportunity, and until the Irish Parliament

Parliament is convinced of its necessity, And what is that opportunity he pretends to wait for—is it not the day and hour when Ireland shall be in a greater degree of weakness? Does he wait until he can again reproach her with her inability to defend herself, and threaten her with withdrawing those commercial favours she receives from England, and from which, he contends, are derived all the sources from which her prosperity arises? Alas! it is but too much in his power to create that moment! And here, let me conjure, let me entreat the House to recollect the shameful manner in which Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled from Ireland, at a moment when he was supposed to have been sent over to grant to the Roman Catholics the rights and privileges which they claimed. The cup of concession was just presented to their lips, but instead of permitting them to taste of it, it was dashed in their faces. Was this the proof of a sincere desire to reconcile the Roman Catholic body? And if he is acquainted, as surely he is, with the workings of the human heart, must he not be well aware of what men will do when so provoked?—We all agree, continued Mr. Sheridan, respecting the necessity of a connexion between the two countries, and that nothing could be more fatal to either than that Ireland should be possessed by the French. Should we not then seriously consider how far the enforcing of this measure may tend to favour what the Right Hon. Gentleman calls the favourite object of the enemy, and which I really believe to be their earnest wish, namely, the Invasion of Ireland. Seeing it as I do, in this light, have I not every reason and motive for imploring the House not to give it any further countenance? Indeed in every view I can take of it, it appears to me not only to be dangerous, but as Childish a scheme as that which the Right Hon. Gentleman has chosen to stigmatise so frequently with that epithet.

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In the long and laboured calumnies of the Right Hon. Gentleman, my valued, my esteemed friend, Mr. Fox, has not escaped from the indecent accusation of a proud, fullen and domineering arrogance, see with what indecency he taunts my honourable friend with not having followed up the resolution of 1782—when he knows full well that that uniform friend to the peace, property and independence of Ireland, remained but two months after in office, and therefore could give it no effect—but did the Right Hon. Gentleman himself, when he came afterwards into power, attempt to bring forward the objections which he had this night so triumphantly urged? Had he not now been fifteen years a Minister, without ever endeavouring to do that which from the first he deemed to be indispensably necessary?—He says, that in the House of Lords in Ireland there was a decided majority in favour of the Union; that in the Commons it was nearly equal; and that out of doors the largest party were in favour of it;—but, Sir, look to the qualities of the division; against the Union were all the country Gentlemen, while those in favour of it were persons in office, and men of no reputation for independency of political character. What is the inducement to the measure held out in Cork? it is said that its marine will be strengthened, and that it will have a dock-yard.—In the north of Ireland, it is stated that if the measure is not acceded to, they will lose the advantages of their Linen Trade; thus a bribe is held out to one, and a threat to the other.—The Hon. Gentleman says he must be assured of the continuance of the connexion with Ireland, and then he says that the Union is the only way to continue it. Is this his proposition or not? I say it is so. But I defy him to mention any one advantage which he offers to Ireland for their acceptance of the Union, which he might not give without

without that condition. For instance, the subject of Tithes has been mentioned; it is said that arrangements are to be made respecting them; but permit me to ask him whether, if the proposed arrangements are right, they cannot as well be carried into effect without the Union as with it? He has said that every enlightened politician on the continent is convinced what an accession of strength it would be to this country if Ireland was united to it (by the way, I don't like this quoting the opinions of continental politicians); but notwithstanding their opinions, let me ask whether, in pursuing his favourite subject, he is not more in danger of acting as the Ally of the French, than of assisting Ireland to repel their attempts? If France knows that Ireland is so far subdued that she is unable to resist an attack on her independence, will not that assurance be the means of her taking those measures by which she may be enabled to strike that dreadful blow she has so long aimed, namely the Separation of Ireland from Great-Britain?—The Honourable Gentleman next comes to the question of the advantages to accrue to Ireland by an Union with this country. He skips over the advantages she has acquired since 1782, and proceeds to give an account of Scotland since the Union, and an argument strongly urged in favour of the Union, is the prosperity which Scotland is said to have enjoyed since it has been united with England:—but might not Scotland have attained this increase of wealth and prosperity merely by dint of her own industry? Besides, Scotland cannot well be compared with Ireland:—in Scotland the Gentlemen of property are fond to reside, and to encourage trade, agriculture, &c.; in Ireland it is the very reverse. Whether without the Union, Scotland would not have been in as good a situation as she is now, is more than I can determine; but is it not true that Ire-
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land prospered from the moment when she shook off her ignominious dependence, and insisted on a free and independent legislation? It is argument founded on mere guess and hazard to say, that after the Union Ireland will derive an increase of progressive advantages beyond what she has enjoyed since 1782.—Then he says that the endeavours of our legislature may, in the course of sixteen years, be defeated by the legislature of Ireland. He argues not from what has been, but from what may be. I may say that the two Parliaments have now, for above 100 years, gone on co-operating with each other without exception. With regard to what is called the Declaratory Law, he knows that the terms of that law never created any apprehension, that it was always considered as a dead letter. I assert that there has been a co-operation of 100 years between the two Parliaments, except only in the instance of the Irish Propositions. It is merely an attempt to entrap and impose upon the House, to state, that a case may occur in which the operations of legislation may be defeated by the want of co-operation in one of the Houses of Parliament of the two countries. It may as well be said, if we send a bill to the House of Lords, and they do not approve of it—"See the mischief of having two Houses of Parliament whose functions impede each other:" or if we send a money-bill, and they think proper to make some alteration in it, we may make the same objection. If you reason of what may be, and not of what is, only see the inconvenience of the argument, particularly in a Constitution like ours, composed of three branches, King, Lords and Commons: it goes to the destruction of the Constitution altogether; for the Lords may on some question be against the Commons, the Commons against the Lords, or the King against both; and these different estates acting diametrically opposite

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posite to each other, you would make an argument of their destruction. Thus it is evident, when you argue against experience and fact, you argue against the existence of one of the best Governments that ever was formed for the protection of the liberty, and property of the subject.

The Hon. Gentleman next came to the state of France, resorting to his old argument of the destruction of order and regular system of Government. French principles and Jacobinism were, as usual, introduced into the debate, and made the subject of splendid invective.—But what was Jacobinism?—Was it not Jacobinism that pretended to make other States more *free, independent, and prosperous* than it found them?—Was it not Jacobinism that called on other countries *to resign their freedom, their independence, and their Constitutions*, with a promise to substitute something better in their place? I agree with him in what he states of the conduct of the people of that country. Indeed it is waste of time to paint the enormities of the French Government toward the people of France, or their atrocities toward the King of Sardinia.—Those pathetic descriptions which have been so often repeated, are of as little effect as the attempts of Germanicus, who is recorded by Tacitus to have endeavoured to raise the fury of the soldiers, by painting in strong colours the indignities his brother's body had received, when it was well known to the army he had no brother. I agree that the conduct of France, where they have attempted incorporation with other countries, is not to be defended; but with respect to that system of Jacobinism so much deprecated by the Right Hon. Gentleman, what is it? Jacobinism is, when under the hypocritical pretence of making a nation free, you in fact take away all they possess that is worth possessing. And in this view the Hon. Gentleman is the Arch-Jacobin of all Europe. He does not know what good he

he is doing the French cause, when he approaches Ireland with a coarse French hug of fraternity, and reprobates the Republic while he is endeavouring exactly to imitate it. He speaks of the great favours bestowed on Ireland, and the acquisitions she has made during the present war. I would, however, have it understood, and indeed the Hon. Gentleman has admitted, that we did not go to war to gain acquisitions, but to prevent the French from making them, to prevent France from overrunning the countries of Europe, and fraternising with the people. Have we done this? Have we prevented France overrunning nearly the whole of Europe? No; quite the reverse; and as to the acquisitions of Ireland, we have suffered her to partake in ours. O Magnanimity! O unbounded Liberality! We say to Ireland, in all we gain you shall go part—in all our blessings in this war you shall have share. What are they? The only blessings we have to offer them are their share of the two hundred and fifty millions expended in the prosecution of the war. This is all the blessing, is all the recompense we have to offer to poor prostrate Ireland.

The next argument of the Hon. Gentleman is, the ignorance and want of civilisation of the Irish. I agree with him in the existence of those evils—but from what do they proceed? I say, it is because men of great property do not, as they do in this country, associate in a certain degree with the lower classes; they do not form themselves into a mass to relieve the poor from poverty and distress; they have not the same motive. That is the source of the penury and wretchedness of the people of Ireland. What is the remedy? The cause of the evil is, the absence of the persons who possess estates in that country; and the remedy you propose is, an Absentee Government.—With respect to Scotland, the case is very different to what it is relative to

to Ireland. The people of Ireland have not that local attachment to their country, which the people of Scotland possess. Except a Scotchman leaves his native home for the good of his country, as the Hon. Secretary over the way (Mr. Dundas) has done, he can be content to remain without roaming, all his life; but not so with an Irishman:—In Ireland, a fashion of emigration prevails; and should the measure of an Union render it more general among the superior classes, the lower will desert their native soil and all its evils; and therefore the remedy proposed is calculated to increase, and give additional poignancy to the weight of that misery and poverty already experienced.

The next argument is held out as a lure to the Catholics; he attaches all the miseries of the country to its religious feuds, and then throws out a lure, that when the Parliament is away, it will be the means of giving freedom to the Catholics. Does he mean that if he thinks Catholic emancipation necessary, there has been a period since he has been Minister, in which it could not have with propriety been brought forward? In Lord Fitzwilliam's administration, will he say that if, instead of having been obliged to rescind what that Nobleman held out, he could not have carried the plan into effect with the general approbation of the country? Sir, if the Parliament of Ireland find that the disunion, weakness, and discord, by which the country is torn, have created the opportunity for wresting its independance; if, in consequence of this impression, it has recourse to union instead of discord, concord instead of disunion, and sets about healing those feuds which have destroyed its vigour—if the Parliament and the People of Ireland were to unite, perhaps, it may still be able to counteract the designs of the Hon. Gentleman. Should I see that confiding principle spring up in Ireland, I should still hope to have my wishes on this subject realised.—

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The Hon. Gentleman has adverted to the argument of the competency of Parliament to dispose of a question of this kind, and to surrender the rights of the people, and make over its own independance; alluding to what I had said, he observed, I had avoided giving any decisive opinion; I certainly did avoid speaking decisively; on the contrary, I merely urged the impolicy of advancing any speculation on a subject which he admits to be one fraught with danger and peril. I applaud the wisdom and temperance of the Irish Parliament, for not coming to any decisive opinion respecting the competency of the Irish Parliament. He observed, that in the case of Scotland, the Parliament of Scotland surrendered their rights in the same manner as is proposed with respect to Ireland. He argues, that if the Parliament of Scotland was not competent to do so, you, Mr. Speaker, have no right to sit where you do; and that every public legislative act performed in this House for Scotland is the result of usurpation. Surely, a more Childish argument was never advanced. If there exists a small Monarchy, no matter what is its size, and it is part of the King's coronation oath that he shall not barter the independance of the Government, as has been done in the German Empire by the Margrave of Anspach to the King of Prussia; still if he does make the surrender, there can be no question of the right by which the Power to whom he surrenders his Kingdom exercises the acts of Sovereignty and Legislation. Wales, though not for a considerable time incorporated in the British Government, yet when it was annexed, no doubt was made as to the loyalty of our acts of Legislature for that part of the kingdom. If others violate the trust reposed in them, it does not follow the acts of the Government in whose favour the trust is violated are not binding. When Chester, the palatinate of Durham, and Berwick-upon-Tweed, which were independent of the rest
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of the kingdom, were called on to send Members to Parliament, no doubt was entertained of their legal capacity to legislate those places.—But because we have the power of so legislating, where a surrender has been duly made, yet it does not follow that those are guilty of usurpation who surrender the rights of others, by assuming a power of disposal inconsistent with the nature of their trust!

It is not my intention, Sir, to oppose going into a Committee, but I shall certainly object to your leaving the Chair, for the purpose of moving two resolutions, which I shall, in case the propositions should be carried, wish to have placed before them, for the purpose of taking off, in some degree, that jealousy which the Irish Parliament, I am afraid, will be apt to entertain of their passing this House, after the measure of Union having been so decidedly rejected in the House of Commons of Ireland.

And now Mr. Speaker, let me conjure and implore the House, not to consider this question, as a question of party. I know that factions and parties exist amongst us; the influence and prerogative of the Crown have found their advocates among the People's Representatives, but on great questions the House has often distinguished itself, by laying aside all paltry, petty, party considerations,—when the good faith, the honour, the safety of England and the sincere good-will of Ireland were the subject of consideration;—I trust that the integrity of Parliament will rise above the murderous and degrading ambition of a British Minister;—I hope you will sit on this measure, as if the character of the land was involved;—and that you will not resist until it is completely overthrown:—Remember the proud-spirited character of the Irish Nation,—remember the state of your domestic affairs,—remember the eventful crisis of the political world;

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world ;—do not, I conjure you, take a mean advantage of the distresses of that country, or subscribe to a system of evasion, of subtilty, low cunning, and insidious artifice—because it is cloathed with a pompous display of words, and a ridiculous parade of empty phrases, on the extension of the most wild and visionary commercial advantages to Ireland, which ever deluded the disordered imagination of the most hair-brained Politician ;—do not, I entreat you, violate your most solemn guarantee, and break your faith pledged by stipulation ;—disdain to be guided by any base, false, and oppressive conduct to your Sister Kingdom ;—degrade not yourselves in the estimation of Irishmen, by a low, underhand, crooked policy :—you know that the most groveling ideas can be conveyed in the most inflated language,—that it is easy to give a mock consequence to low cavils, and to utter quibbles in heroics ;—abandon the sordid ideas of the mercantile principle on which this obnoxious measure is founded, and shew that whatever may be the character of the Minister, this House has none of the attributes of the Trickster and the Tyrant ; exhibit to your dear, your valued Sister Kingdom, all the captivating characteristic of expended intellect ;—study to attain great ends by great means ;—support truth, protect the weak, relieve the oppressed, and right the injured,—but on no consideration countenance fraud, rapine, ignominy, injustice ;—these are not the times for skulking meanness, bombastical prevarication, or perverted wisdom :—I solemnly declare, that in every point of view in which I can consider the measure of an Union, its great and leading features are—obliquity, fraud, falsehood, folly, treachery, oppression,—the most glaring violation of national faith, and the most open breach of solemn engagement.



SUBSTANCE OF

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THE SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT HON. HENRY DUNDAS, *K*

IN

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

THURSDAY, FEB. 7, 1799,

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

LEGISLATIVE UNION WITH IRELAND.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY JOHN EXSHAW, 98, CRAFTON-STREET.

1799.

COPY
OF
HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE
ON THE SUBJECT OF
THE LEGISLATIVE UNION WITH IRELAND,
PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES ON
JANUARY 22, 1799.

GEORGE REX.

“ His Majesty is persuaded that the unremitting industry with
“ which our enemies persevere in their avowed design of
“ effecting the Separation of Ireland from this Kingdom,
“ cannot fail to engage the particular attention of Parlia-
“ ment; and His Majesty recommends it to this House to
“ consider of the most effectual means of counteracting and
“ finally defeating this design; and he trusts that a review of
“ all the circumstances which have recently occurred (joined
“ to the sentiment of mutual affection and common interest)
“ will dispose the Parliament of both Kingdoms to provide,
“ for settling such a complete and final adjustment as may
“ best tend to improve and perpetuate a Connection essential
“ for their common security, and to augment and consoli-
“ date the Strength, Power, and Resources of the British
“ Empire.”

G. R.

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TO: FROM: NO. EST. IN

EXAMINED TO BOTH HOUSES OF

CONFIDENTIAL

THE
MUSEUM

SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT HON. HENRY DUNDAS.

MR. SPEAKER,

“NOTWITHSTANDING the arguments so strenuously advanced on the other side of the House, I have no hesitation, Sir, in declaring that I rise with a considerable degree of satisfaction to refute the objections urged against the Union with Ireland. Having followed the last Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Grey) with the greatest attention, I flatter myself, that, from my knowledge of the subject, I am fully able to convince the House, that the reasons urged against the measure are totally groundless. The last Honourable Speaker has dwelt with much minuteness on the discussions of the year 1782, and on the commercial and political situation in which Ireland was then placed, and has since continued, in consequence of those discussions; but I beg
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leave to observe, that every deduction from those circumstances, and every grant made to Ireland at that period, have nothing to do with the question now before the House. The present proposition contains in it no suggestion derogatory to the acknowledged independence of the Irish Parliament. It is a proposition for the incorporation of the two Legislatures into one, without infringing on the liberty or independence of either.

“ In addressing itself to the judgment and decision of the Irish Parliament, this country explicitly acknowledges its independence; and to put an end to all cavil on that part of the argument, I am ready to admit, that by the transactions of 1782, the Irish Parliament is placed on the same footing of independence, in relation to Great Britain, as Scotland was with regard to England before the Union of the two kingdoms; and certainly I have never heard that the proposal made in 1707 for the Union of England and Scotland has, at any period, been treated by the most captious opponents of the measure, as an attack on the independence of the Parliament of Scotland.

“ With regard to the measure itself, so far from operating injuriously on Ireland, I can prove,

prove, before I sit down, by a reference to the affairs of Scotland, at and after the Union, that a similar measure would be attended with similar benefits to Ireland, by improving and increasing the political and commercial advantages of the latter country in the same proportion as those of the former have been improved and increased; and that the latter country would experience an equal increase of commercial and political advantages.

“ I had entertained an opinion, that the question would have been argued in a different stage of the business, and that there would not arise any doubt on leaving the Chair.— Had the motion for the Committee been allowed to pass, Sir, both sides of the House would have had better opportunities of understanding each other by mutual explanations. That mode, however, meeting with opposition, I and my friends are reduced to the necessity of debating the measure on the particular point of your leaving the Chair. The discussion of the grand question, in this stage, is so far an inconvenience to me, as it leaves me less leisure to arrange and methodise the various statements I have collected on the subject. I am, however, ready to meet the opponents of the measure in any way they please, convinced

that I am armed with such authorities, and such arguments, as will overturn every objection that can be offered. Since the Union was first in contemplation, I have endeavoured to make myself as conversant with the subject as possible, by every research of history, and by a very careful examination of the documents on which were grounded the articles of the Union with Scotland. For this research I claim no particular praise, it being my duty, as well as that of every other Member of Parliament, to acquire as accurate a knowledge as possible of the subject under discussion.

“ In vindication of myself and friends, I have no hesitation in saying, that the affairs of Ireland demand at this period particular circumspection. I will assume, as a proposition, which I believe no man will have the boldness to deny, that there does exist at this time in Ireland a spirit of clamour and dissention, of treachery and treason, which menaces the overthrow of the present Government. Conspiracies are so widely extended, their influence is so deeply infused into the minds of the people of Ireland, and the connection between the two countries is thereby so much endangered, that without the active and immediate interference of the Government, the result, in the opinion of the most intelligent men,

men, might have been a total separation of Ireland from this kingdom. Viewing Ireland in this perilous situation, it was the duty of His Majesty's servants to extricate her from the intrigues of the common enemy, by preserving and improving the connection which has so long and so happily subsisted between that country and Great Britain.

“ Now the question is, Whether or not the political diseases alluded to were not likely to be removed by incorporating the two Parliaments into one ?

“ In the observations which naturally arise from the subject, I beg leave to assure the House, that I mean nothing disrespectful to the Parliament or People of Ireland, when I affirm, that the evil machinations of the enemies of both countries have been too successful in most instances, and that the check or controul of the English Government is absolutely necessary for the salvation of Ireland. In my animadversions, I am not about to throw out any reflections injurious to the Gentlemen who constitute the Legislature of the Sister Kingdom ; and I hope I shall not be accused of illiberal motives when I give it as my opinion, that a very great part of the people have been corrupted by the new doctrines,

trines, so dangerous to the existence of all regular Governments, consequently so dangerous to that of the Empire. Every good man, who had seen or heard of the influence of those destructive doctrines on the Continent, would wish well on the present occasion to the active exertions of the Government of Great Britain, endeavouring to preserve the liberty, the independence, and the happiness of Ireland. The picture which I draw of Ireland is of a gloomy and lamentable aspect; but in proportion as it is so, it becomes the duty of every well wisher to both countries to devise some remedy by which he may destroy the hopes of the enemy, and give new life and vigour to the Sister Kingdom.

“ If any political maxim can be held more generally true than another, it is, that in order to regulate well the affairs of any nation, it is necessary that there should subsist a mutual confidence between the governors and the governed. But it is a melancholy truth, that there does not exist in the great body of the people of Ireland; that confidence in the Parliament of Ireland which is essential to its utility. I need not go far to search for the reasons of this essential defect. It grew out of the frame and constitution of the Parliament of Ireland.

“ If

“ If the whole power of the country were vested in one-fourth of the people, and that fourth was separated from the other three-fourths by religious distinctions, heightened and envenomed by ancient and hereditary animosities, it was impossible that there could exist a mutual confidence between them. This, however, was certainly the situation of the Parliament and People of Ireland. If there were such dissensions and animosities in Ireland, the interference of a British Parliament was admirably calculated to restore peace and confidence, by granting to the people of Ireland a free participation of all the privileges enjoyed by their fellow subjects of Great Britain.

“ It is impossible to imagine a remedy more appropriate to the radical cause of the disease which poisons the peace and happiness of Ireland, than the measure of an incorporating Union of the Legislatures of the two kingdoms. The Protestants would, of course, lay aside their jealousies and distrust, being certain that against any attempt to endanger the Protestant establishment in Ireland, the whole strength of the united parliament must be exerted; and, on the other hand, every Catholic who is a friend to the connection with Great Britain, but is desirous to obtain every indulgence, and be admitted

mitted into a participation of every privilege and benefit consistent with that connection, would be confident that their cause would be candidly and impartially considered by an united parliament, the great body of which would be relieved from those apprehensions, jealousies, and inveterate animosities, interwoven into the frame and constitution of the separate parliament of Ireland.

“ When Gentlemen talk so much of the Parliament of Ireland, and insist that a consent to the present measure would totally destroy the liberty and independence of the Irish Parliament, I am certain they bewilder themselves in a misunderstanding of the terms which they use. How could it have that effect? Would not there be, by the incorporated Parliaments, the three estates of King, Lords, and Commons? And if there be a sufficiency of the aristocracy, and a sufficiency of the democracy of the different countries, how would either the independence of the Parliament, or the liberty of the people of Ireland suffer? I have no hesitation, Sir, in maintaining, that an incorporated Parliament, partly English, partly Scotch, and partly Irish, is much better calculated for the management of the affairs of the British Empire, than separate Parliaments in England, Scotland, and Ireland. The powers of
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of a Parliament, so constituted, would be more extensive and effectual than when acting separately in different places. It ought also to be recollected, that with all the boasted independence of the Parliament of Ireland, it could not give vigour or effect to its acts, till approved by the third estate, whose residence was in England. The controlling power was properly vested in the Sovereign of this country, who was also the Sovereign of Scotland and Ireland. Then the Parliament of Ireland is not entirely independent. And if it be true, that the Parliament of Ireland, as now constituted, be dependent on the third estate of this country, it is evident that the Parliament of Ireland is not that independent state which this argument seems always to take for granted.

“ The more this part of the argument is probed, the more fallacious the reasoning of its authors will appear. One of the most valuable privileges which the British parliament enjoys, is, the right it claims to watch over and control the conduct of the Executive Government, even in the exercise of those powers which are justly considered as the clearest and most undoubted prerogatives of the Crown. There is not one of those prerogatives in the exercise of which the servants of the King are not responsible, and to

the control of which, in that shape, the power of Parliament does not extend; and that power is bounded only by its own wisdom and discretion. The Parliament of Ireland, in its separate state, is debarred from this important privilege, which it would obtain by an incorporation with the Parliament of Great Britain. This observation is the more striking, when it is considered that this power of the British Parliament extends, in the manner I have stated, to the control of the Third Estate of the Irish Parliament, even in its legislative capacity, and that exclusively of the other branches of the Irish Legislature. It is impossible candidly and dispassionately to examine those considerations, and not feel how extensively the character and importance of the Irish Parliament would be exalted by the Union of the two Legislatures.

“ In support of these propositions, if they are disputed, I refer to the authority of Mr. Grattan, the champion of Irish independence, who says, “the Parliament of Ireland cannot act independently; for in all questions of peace or war, it must implicitly follow the Parliament of Great Britain.” If the Parliament of Ireland were as independent as its advocates now insist, why should it be obliged to adopt the measures of the Parliament of Great Britain,
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on all occasions of peace and war? The Incorporated Parliament of Ireland would have all the privileges of the Incorporated Parliament of Scotland. To corroborate these facts, Sir, I, as one of the forty-five Scotch Members, can, in the face of the 513 English Members, freely discuss and watch the interests of Scotland. The Parliament, thus constituted by the Union, had not deprived Scotland of any of the privileges enjoyed previously to its incorporation with England. The Union had encreased the privilege of the Scottish Members: For, instead of confining their deliberations to the affairs of Scotland, they were empowered to take part in discussions respecting the affairs not only of England, but of the whole British Empire; and so far as regarded the third estate, had even an interference in the affairs of Ireland.

“ If the Parliament of Scotland, Sir, thus incorporated, has all the rights now described, the Parliament of Ireland, incorporated on similar principles, would have the same privileges. The deliberations of the Parliament of Ireland, thus constituted, would also operate successfully in all questions respecting the affairs not only of Ireland, Scotland, and England, but of the whole British dominions. It would enlarge its powers, and give greater vigour and effect to its operations.

tions. But now the Parliament of Ireland has no right to discuss questions in which Great Britain only is interested. It is a misstatement of terms to talk of destroying the Parliament of Ireland, for the Union would place the Irish Members in the same situation as the Members of the Parliament of Great Britain.—I condemn, Sir, the operations of personal vanity, which, in this instance at least, run riot against the principles of common sense. I wish Gentlemen would direct their pride and honour to acts of laudable ambition—I wish they would evince greater patriotism, by a due attention to the interests of both countries. If considerations of personal vanity and self independence are to be allowed to operate on this subject, let Gentlemen recollect, that if their genius be ever so acute, their talents ever so transcendent, their eloquence ever so splendid, all those wonderful powers are confined to one little island. All their genius is limited to their own internal regulations, and reduced to their own small territory. Independence and liberty are fine sounding words; but can it be seriously maintained, that for the preservation of these, it is necessary to have a separate and local Legislature. The soil and spot where the Parliament sit do not constitute its value, but its adaptation to preserve the general interests of the community at large. This is the

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only true and valuable object of independence. I address myself therefore to the true pride of Ireland, which ought not to be biased by false principles of honour. A mind thus actuated is governed by a childish, not a manly ambition. Let, however, the Irish Parliament accept of a participation of all the rights of the Parliament of Great Britain, and they would find, that their eloquence would not be confined to England, or to any other country, but their voices would extend to every corner of the world. They would be heard, not only in Europe, but in Asia, Africa, and America. The Parliament of Ireland would then become Members of the British Parliament, which had enabled this proud country to exalt its head amidst the wreck of surrounding nations; had given it energy and vigour to resist the pernicious doctrines of the French Republic; and held us up as a monument of admiration and envy to the remotest corners of the world. They would then be the advocates not only of Ireland and Great Britain, but advocates for the rights and liberties of the human race.

A Parliament thus constituted would be worthy of true ambition. It would be a more respectable body than what had been described by a gentleman who, in talking of the limitations of

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of the Parliament of Ireland, compared it to a Great Vestry or Parish Meeting. I wish, Sir, to give efficiency to the Parliament of Ireland—to bring it from that narrow and confined situation, to act in a more enlarged sphere—to explore new sources of true greatness—to participate and enjoy all the benefits and advantages of the Parliament of Great Britain. Whether therefore I consider the state of the Irish Parliament in its collective or individual capacity, I am equally decided it will gain extensively by the success of the present measure.

“ An objection has been taken that we ought not to have proceeded on the business in this country till the propositions had been made to us by the Parliament and People of Ireland. I confess I do not understand the objection. In the progress of this important business, it was intended to follow, step by step, the manner of recommending and adopting the Union between Scotland and England. When the Queen of England sent a message to the Parliament of England on the subject of the Union, Her Majesty sent also a similar message to the Parliament of Scotland. But we have many records, by which we may direct our proceedings. The measure of an Union with Scotland had been so often in contemplation, that the general plan required

required little amendment. It had been proposed in the days of James I. in those of Charles I. in those of the Usurper Cromwell, afterwards by William, and lastly by Anne. It never was offered in the one Parliament, without at the same time recommending it to the others.

“ In considering the question of an incorporating Union of the two Legislatures of Great Britain and Ireland, it is impossible, in every view of the subject, not to turn one's eyes to the state of Scotland before and since the Union, and to contemplate the advantages which have resulted from it to that part of the United Kingdom. This part of the subject would lead into such a length of detail, it is impossible to pursue it fully, without wearing out the attention and patience of the House. I must, therefore, content myself with referring to a few general heads, which will strike more forcibly by putting them in a comparative view of what they were at the Union, and what they are now :—

COMPARATIVE VIEW.

SHIPPING in 1692	8,618 tons, value	£. 25,854
Ditto - in 1792	162,274 tons, value	£. 1,298,192
LIEN in 1692	1,702 tons,	
Ditto - in 1792	18,468 tons,	
SCOTCH LINEN 1700	1,000,000 yards for sale	
Ditto - in 1796	23,102,404	
CUSTOMS at the Union	£. 34,300	
Ditto - in 1798	284,577	
EXCISE at the Union	33,500	
Ditto - in 1798	851,775	
POPULATION in 1755	1,265,000	
Ditto - in 1795	1,534,000	
GLASGOW Population } from 1701 to 1710 }	14,790	
Ditto - in 1798	77,042	

“ From this statement the happy effects of the Union are evident. I wish particularly to impress upon the minds of those who oppose the measure, the wonderful increase of the Scots Linen Trade. This I am the more eager to notice, as the Linen is the present staple manufacture of Ireland; and a celebrated character in that country has thought himself warranted to descend so far as to endeavour to create an alarm on that subject. At the time of the Union, that trade in Scotland amounted to about one million yards; but by the fostering care of the United Parliaments, and from a benign consolidation of the interests of both kingdoms, it had increased to the quantity of twenty-

twenty-three millions, manufactured in the year 1796.

“ These improvements and increase of trade were not confined to any particular part of Scotland. They were experienced in every corner of it; and there is not now an inhabitant of any spot in all Scotland who has not cause to rejoice at the event.

“ Many melancholy pictures, in the shape of prophecies, were presented to the public view on that memorable occasion. Among other false prophecies, permit me to make a few remarks on that celebrated speech of Lord Belhaven:

‘ I think I see,’ exclaimed his Lordship a
 ‘ national church voluntarily descending upon an
 ‘ equal level with Jews, Papists,’ &c.—Now to prove his Lordship a false prophet in this, I not only think I see, but I actually do see, that very National Church, founded upon a firm foundation, at the distance of ninety years from the passing of the Act of Union; and that very National Church so firmly secured in all her privileges, that it is very likely she will continue to possess them, unimpaired, for ever! In truth, her simplicity and her poverty, will remain to

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her an impregnable security against the plunder and rapine of all ruffian hands !

“ I think I see,” continues his Lordship, “ the Noble and Honourable Peerage of Scotland, now divested of their followers and vassalages, and put even on an equal footing with their own very vassals.” If the Union has had a tendency to break asunder the bands of feudal vassalage, which prevailed to too great an excess in that country, wise and virtuous men will not be disposed to consider this as one of the evil consequences to be lamented in the formation of a Legislative Union of the two kingdoms. As to the Peerage of Scotland, considered as a body in the State, it may be true they suffered some transitory mortifications in consequence of the Union ; but I believe there is no candid or good man in that whole respectable body who would wish to change their present situation for all the pomp and poverty they enjoyed previous to the Union.

“ I think I see,” adds his Lordship, “ the Royal State of Boroughs walking their desolate streets,” &c. On the contrary, I see that the Boroughs, instead of being desolated, are most of them ten times improved in population, in industry,

dusttry, and in wealth! To prove this, it is only necessary to mention the names of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Perth, Montrose, Dundee; and in short every other town of any name or consequence in that part of the United Kingdom,

‘ I think I see our learned Judges,’ continues Lord Belhaven, ‘ laying aside their practiques and decisions, studying the common law of England,’ &c. Now I see no such violation or alteration of the municipal law of Scotland, which is as purely administered now as it was before the Union took place. But although the Scotch Judges do not study the common law of England, by way of introducing it into their courts, I certainly must do my Lord Belhaven the justice to acknowledge, that at all times the Northern part of the island has produced some of the brightest luminaries of the law of England, who never would have emblazoned Westminster-hall with their transcendant talents, had not the Union taken place between England and Scotland,

‘ I think I see,’ adds his Lordship, ‘ the valiant and gallant foldiery of Scotland, all their old corps broke up, the common soldiers left

‘to beg, and the youngest English corps kept
 ‘standing.’ Now I do see, that the natives of
 Scotland, both in the army and the navy, and
 the common foldier, and the man before the
 mast, to the general in the field, and the admiral
 on the ocean, instead of being worse treated than
 the English, are put upon the most equitable
 footing with the soldiers and the sailors of this
 part of the united kingdom, according to their
 respective merits ! I do see nothing but the most
 liberal rewards and provisions made for the Scot-
 tish, as well as the English hero ; both of whom
 have consolidated their strength, by a politic and
 glorious Union, for the general benefit of every
 part of the British empire !

‘I think I see,’ continues this noble false pro-
 phet, ‘the honest industrious tradesman drinking
 ‘water in place of ale ; eating his saltless pot-
 ‘tage, and petitioning in vain for encouragement
 ‘to his manufactories !’—The increase of excise,
 in Scotland, since the time of the Union, is cer-
 tainly no proof that this part of the prophecy
 has been fulfilled ; or that water has become the
 beverage of the people of Scotland. But I need
 not enlarge on this topic. The reverse of the
 prophecy is notoriously the truth, in every re-
 spect.

“ I think

‘ I think I see the laborious ploughman,’ adds this visionary, ‘ with his corn spoiling upon his hands, for want of sale, cursing the day of his birth,’ &c.—Now I do see, on the contrary, the mere ploughman enjoying treble wages, and treble comforts; while his master, the farmer, instead of his corn spoiling upon his hands, for want of sale, reaps such profits from its immediate sale, as enables him to live almost upon an equal footing, in point of every social enjoyment, with even the hereditary landed gentleman, the possessor of the soil itself!

‘ I think I see,’ continues his Lordship, ‘ the pretty daughters of our landed gentlemen, petitioning for want of husbands, and their sons for want of employment.’—Now I do see, and I believe every one in this House sees, that the pretty daughters of the Scotch nobility and gentry, so far from petitioning for husbands, bear, at the present moment, a very high premium in the hymeneal market of the English aristocracy!

“ I need not enlarge on a topic which is proved to every man’s observation, by the examples daily passing before them. In truth, nothing has tended more to accelerate the happy connection

nection which now subsists between the two parts of the island, than the intercourse of friendship, habits, and affection, arising from the union of the beauty, wealth, and talents, produced by the intermarriage of the inhabitants of the opposite sides of the Tweed. And as to their sons petitioning for want of employment, let me do justice to this liberal nation by declaring, that we need only look into every profession in life, from the Scotch gardener, baker, and hair-dresser; up to the Scotch merchant, the Scotch physician, the Scotch general, the Scotch admiral, and the Scotch lawyer; to prove, that, since the Union, merit has been equally rewarded throughout the whole island, whether its possessor was rocked in his cradle on the south, or on the north side of the Tweed!

“ The noble Lord concludes this prophetic reverie, with an allusion to the death of Julius Cæsar, which he compares to the murder of *Mother Caledonia*, by her own sons in the Scottish parliament. The comparison is so wild and inapt in all its parts, that it would be a waste of time to pursue it. If the Scotch parliament had been such a tyrant as the comparison would suppose, there was real patriotism in her instant annihilation. But in justice to the memory of my
ancestors,

ancestors, I disclaim any such charge, as imputable to the ancient Scottish Legislature. Whoever will take the trouble of perusing the acts and regulations of the Scotch parliament, will find a fund of much wisdom and good policy to admire. But the Union of the two kingdoms is ill understood, and ill defended, by those who conceive that it proceeded either from want of wisdom, or want of virtue in the Scotch parliament. It proceeded from a principle of rendering the exertions of its members more extensively useful, by enlarging its functions; and making them, as they now are, sharers in the deliberations of that Legislature, which is the only true exalted assembly, for the rational and practical freedom, for the security and the felicity of man, on the whole surface of the habitable globe!

“Considering these historical facts, the people of Scotland sacrificed much more than what is now required from Ireland; and I believe the Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Grey) will admit, that the people of *his* Northern neighbourhood had also experienced the happy effects of the Union. It was certainly within his recollection, as faithfully recorded in history, that the two Nations had thought it necessary to suffer a vast waste of territory

tory, near the River which separated England from Scotland, to serve as a boundary; and that all this desert, anciently a *land of neutrality*, was immediately cultivated and adorned, and, besides its excellent agricultural qualities, had produced men of talents, capable of taking a distinguished part in the debates of the British Parliament, and capable also of defending the liberties and privileges of *Northumberland!*—By the Union with Scotland, and the cultivation of this waste land, England got also the co-operation of a race of gallant men, who aided her in the most perilous situations, and were frequently the foremost to fight her battles!

“ Against all the prophecies of Lord Belhaven, and the other opposers of the Union, I will take the liberty of bringing under the recollection of the House a passage in a letter from Queen Anne to the Scottish Parliament, recommending to them to take the articles which had been agreed upon at London under their consideration. It was in these words:—

‘ The Union has been long desired by both Nations, and
 ‘ we shall esteem it as the greatest glory of our reign to have
 ‘ it now perfected, being fully persuaded that it must prove the
 ‘ greatest happiness of our People. An entire and perfect
 ‘ Union will be the solid foundation of lasting peace; it will
 ‘ secure

‘ secure your Religion, Liberty, and Property, remove the
 ‘ animosities among yourselves, and the jealousies and differ-
 ‘ ences betwixt our two kingdoms; it must increase your
 ‘ strength, riches, and trade, and by this Union, the whole
 ‘ Island being joined in affection, and free from all apprehen-
 ‘ sions of different interests, will be enabled to resist all its ene-
 ‘ mies, support its interest every where, and maintain the li-
 ‘ berties of Europe.”

“ From this remarkable passage it was evident,
 that Her Majesty was a true Prophetess, for not
 one syllable of her prediction has failed.

“ It has been asked, what right have we to
 impute all those advantages to the Union of the
 two kingdoms, and why is it not to be supposed
 that Scotland, like other nations, would have
 advanced in prosperity from the various causes
 which have contributed to the modern wealth of
 other states?

“ There is a multitude of answers that might
 be given to this question, founded on the local
 situation of Scotland, her internal policy, and her
 relation to other nations, which must for ever
 have debarred that kingdom, in a separate state,
 from participating in that prosperity which has
 marked the progress of other states in Europe.
 But in place of consuming the time of the House
 by reasoning, to which it may justly be imputed
 that it is influenced by events that have since oc-
 curred,

curred, I think I shall give them more satisfaction by using the words of a contemporary statesman, who shews himself a master of the subject, who was one of the Commissioners for treating with England for an Union, and who, upon the first article being brought under the consideration of the Scotch Parliament, gave his sentiments in the following words :

‘ My Lord, this article is the foundation of the
 ‘ whole treaty, and the approving or rejecting of
 ‘ it must determine Union, or no Union, betwixt
 ‘ both kingdoms.

‘ How far the approving this article conduces
 ‘ to our happiness appears evidently, by consi-
 ‘ dering the three different ways proposed for re-
 ‘ trieving the languishing condition of this na-
 ‘ tion; which are, that we continue under the
 ‘ same Sovereign with England, with limitations
 ‘ on his prerogative, as King of Scotland; that
 ‘ the two kingdoms be incorporated into one, or
 ‘ that they be entirely separated.

‘ That the Union of Crowns, with limitations
 ‘ on the successor, is not sufficient to rectify the
 ‘ bad state of this nation, appears from these po-
 ‘ sitions, founded on reason and experience.

‘ Two kingdoms, subject to one Sovereign,
 ‘ having different interests, the nearer these are
 ‘ one to another, the greater jealousy and emula-
 ‘ tion will be betwixt them.

‘ Every Monarch, having two or more king-
 ‘ doms, will be obliged to prefer the council and
 ‘ interest of the stronger to that of the weaker,
 ‘ and the greater disparity of power and riches
 ‘ there is betwixt these kingdoms, the greater
 ‘ influence the more powerful nation will have on
 ‘ the sovereign. Notwithstanding these positions,
 ‘ I shall suppose the Parliament of Scotland is
 ‘ vested with the power of making peace and
 ‘ war, of rewarding and punishing persons of all
 ‘ ranks, of levying troops, and of the negative
 ‘ itself.

‘ I could shew the inconveniencies that must
 ‘ attend such a state of government, in disposal of
 ‘ places, and managing public affairs. I could
 ‘ likewise show the improbability of attaining such
 ‘ conditions, or keeping them if attained. But
 ‘ laying aside such considerations, my humble
 ‘ opinion is, that we cannot reap any benefit from
 ‘ these conditions of government, without the
 ‘ assistance of England, and the people thereof
 ‘ will never be convinced, to promote the interest

' of Scotland, till both kingdoms are incorporated
 ' into one ; so that, I conceive, such a state of
 ' limitations to be no better for Scotland than if
 ' it were entirely separated from England ; in
 ' which state, there is little appearance of procur-
 ' ing any remedy to our present circumstances ;
 ' which appears from these uncontroverted posi-
 ' tions.

' The people and government of Scotland,
 ' must be richer or poorer, as they have plenty or
 ' scarcity of money, the common measure of
 ' trade.

' No money or things of value can be pur-
 ' chased in the course of commerce, but where
 ' there is a force to protect it.

' This nation is behind all other nations of
 ' Europe, for many years, with respect to the
 ' effects of an extended trade.

' This nation being poor, and without force to
 ' protect its commerce, cannot reap great advan-
 ' tages by it, till it partake of the trade and pro-
 ' tection of some powerful neighbour nation, that
 ' can communicate both these.

' To

‘ To illustrate this last position, I shall give a
 ‘ short view of the state of commerce we must
 ‘ needs be in, with respect to our neighbour na-
 ‘ tions, supposing an entire separation from Eng-
 ‘ land.

‘ The ordinary means whereby we can flourish
 ‘ in wealth, is that balance which arises from
 ‘ the exchange of our natural or artificial product
 ‘ with other places : but we have no valuable
 ‘ branch of export, which does not interfere with
 ‘ the like commodity, in some more powerful
 ‘ neighbour nation, whose interest it is to sup-
 ‘ press or discourage our commodity, for raising
 ‘ the value of its own ; so that there is no demon-
 ‘ strable security for the vent and encouragement
 ‘ of any branch of our export.

‘ Can it be expected, that Holland will suffer
 ‘ us to improve our fishery, which is to them a
 ‘ nursery for seamen, a livelihood to many fami-
 ‘ lies, and an immense treasure to the public.

‘ If we traffic with England, our linen cloth,
 ‘ cattle, and coals will be discouraged, at least
 ‘ after the same manner that we discourage ex-
 ‘ port from thence. If we traffic with Muscovy,
 ‘ Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Germany, France,
 ‘ Spain,

‘ Spain, Portugal, and Italy, the sale of our com-
 ‘ modities will be of small value in those places,
 ‘ seeing the Dutch or English, by their encrease
 ‘ of trade, are capable to serve them with most
 ‘ of the like goods, cheaper and better than we.

‘ Let us look to any other part of the world
 ‘ for vent to our product, and we will find other
 ‘ nations have prevented us.

‘ If we attempt the East India trade, that is
 ‘ already enhanced by the Dutch, English, French,
 ‘ Spaniards, or Portuguese, from whom we must
 ‘ expect opposition; they themselves opposing
 ‘ one another daily, and we of no force to de-
 ‘ bate the same with the most inconsiderable of
 ‘ them.

‘ The trade of Africa is for the most part of
 ‘ small value, and every province of America is
 ‘ claimed as property by some powerful European
 ‘ nation.

‘ If it be said, that Scotland may make alliance
 ‘ with one of its neighbour nations for protec-
 ‘ tion; that alliance must be with Holland,
 ‘ England, or France: other countries being so
 ‘ remote, or poor, that their friendships can be of
 ‘ little use to us.

‘ With

' With Holland we can have no advantageous
 ' alliance, because its chief branch of trade is the
 ' same with ours; with the English we can expect
 ' no profitable friendship, for they being our near
 ' neighbours will be jealous of our encrease in
 ' power; and from France few advantages can be
 ' reaped till the old offensive and defensive league
 ' be revived betwixt France and Scotland, which
 ' would give umbrage to the English, and occa-
 ' sion a war betwixt them and us. And allow-
 ' ing the Scots, in such a juncture, with the as-
 ' sistance of France, to conquer England, Scot-
 ' land, by that conquest, could not hope to better
 ' its present state; for it is more than probable,
 ' the conqueror would make his residence in Eng-
 ' land, as formerly the northern people used to
 ' do in their southern expeditions.

' From these considerations, I conceive, that
 ' this nation, by an entire separation from Eng-
 ' land, cannot extend its trade, so as to raise its
 ' power in proportion to other trafficking nations
 ' in Europe: but that hereby we may be in dan-
 ' ger of returning to that Gothic Constitution of
 ' government, wherein our forefathers were,
 ' which was frequently attended with feuds, mur-
 ' ders, depredations, and rebellions.

My

' My Lord, I am sorry, that in place of things;
 ' we amuse ourselves with words: for my part, I
 ' comprehend no durable Union betwixt Scot-
 ' land and England but that exprest in this
 ' article by one kingdom; that is to say, one
 ' people, one civil government, and one in-
 ' terest.

' It is true the words Fæderal Union are
 ' become very fashionable, and may be hand-
 ' somely fitted to delude unthinking people; but
 ' if any Member of this House will give himself
 ' the trouble to examine what conditions or ar-
 ' ticles are understood by these words, and re-
 ' duce them into any kind of fæderal compact,
 ' whereby distinct nations have been united, I
 ' will presume to say, these will be found im-
 ' practicable, or of very little use to us.

' But to put that matter in a clear light, these
 ' queries ought to be duly examined, whether a
 ' fæderal union be practicable betwixt two na-
 ' tions accustomed to a monarchical government?
 ' Whether there can be any sure guaranty pro-
 ' jected, for the observance of the articles of a
 ' fæderal compact stipulated betwixt two nations,
 ' whereof the one is much superior to the other
 ' in riches, numbers of people, and an extended
 ' commerce?

' commerce? Whether the advantages of fæderal
 ' union do balance its disadvantages? Whether
 ' the English will accept a fæderal union, sup-
 ' posing it to be for the true interest of both na-
 ' tions? Whether any fæderal compact between
 ' Scotland and England, is sufficient to secure the
 ' peace of this island, to fortify it against the in-
 ' trigues and invasions of its foreign enemies?
 ' And whether England, in prudence, ought to
 ' communicate its trade and protection to this
 ' nation, till both kingdoms are incorporated
 ' into one?'

" Thus spoke Mr. Seton, of Pitmedden, at the
 time when he had no resources, from which to
 draw his conclusions, but those of his own en-
 lightened understanding, and the view he could
 take of the existing state of the other nations of
 the world. But his reasoning was solid, and I
 would injure it by adding more to the particular
 points he has so ably treated of. I shall, how-
 ever, add one fact, which, in my conception,
 proves, beyond a doubt, that the rapid progress
 of prosperity of Scotland, arose from the Union
 of the two kingdoms. Where did the prospe-
 rity of Scotland make its first appearance, and
 its most early progress? It was in the western
 parts of the kingdom, owing clearly to the cir-

F

cumstance

cumstance of those ports being locally best situated to take the benefit of the colonial trade, then opened to the enterprize of Scotland.

“ A question has been triumphantly asked by an Honourable Gentleman? ‘ Why not give all those advantages to Ireland without a Union?’ The best way I can answer this, is, by another question—If Great Britain should communicate these indulgences or opportunities to Ireland, could she, under her present Constitution or Government, take the advantage of them? I am convinced she could not, and that in her present situation such concessions would not be productive of advantage. Without an incorporated Union, they would be of no avail; for the strength and resources of both countries must be consolidated, in order to enable Ireland to reap the full advantage from such concessions.

“ It is from the confidence in the strength of Government, that a communication of capital and other advantages can alone arise. And this consideration recalls to my mind a proceeding, which took place before the Union with Scotland, which put the interests of that kingdom and Ireland in a sort of issue.—It happened early in the reign of Charles II. From the period of the crowns of both kingdoms

kingdoms being united in the person of James I. Scotland enjoyed several important commercial advantages derived from England, until the reign of Charles II. when they were done away by the provisions of the Navigation Act: the Scots remonstrated against what they called an injustice, and Commissioners were appointed to take cognizance of the matter. In the course of these proceedings, the Scots, as already stated, loudly complained that they were treated with less indulgence than the Irish.

“ This complaint was answered by the English Commissioners as follows:—

‘ And whereas your lop’ps (lordships) doe in severall places
 ‘ give hints at Ireland, and seeme to make it a ground why it is
 ‘ and other privileges should be granted to Scotland, because
 ‘ granted to Ireland, the answer is most cleare and obvious,
 ‘ (viz.) that Ireland is not onely under one king with us as
 ‘ Scotland, but belongs to, and is an appendix of the crown of
 ‘ England, and laws made in the Parliament of England doe
 ‘ bind them; and no law can be enacted by the Parliament of
 ‘ Ireland, but what passeth the Privy Councell of England, and
 ‘ orders of the Councell of England, and the Greate Seale of
 ‘ England, doe take place in Ireland; yea, the treasurer and
 ‘ other great officers of state in England, have jurisdiction and
 ‘ superintendency in Ireland; by all which it is absolutely in
 ‘ our power, when we grant privileges to them, to compell and
 ‘ keepe them up to the restrictions of them; all which is quite
 ‘ otherwise in relation to Scotland.

‘ These

“ These were assigned as reasons to the Scotch Commissioners, why Ireland, in its then existing connection with England, was considered as entitled to a degree of indulgence superior to that allowed to their nation; matters are now totally reversed, and in the present very much altered state of the relation between Great Britain and Ireland, a similar answer may be given to the question, “ Why not give these advantages to Ireland without a Union?”

“ In addition to this it might be observed, that the English Government, consistent with the duty they owe to their British Fellow-subjects, could not make such concessions to Ireland under its present Constitution and separate Legislature; so that the very circumstance of Ireland enjoying what is called an Independent Legislature is the means of depriving her of a participation in those commercial benefits. Concessions of such a nature, I contend, cannot be safely granted until the superintendence of an Imperial Parliament possesses the control over the resources of the Empire at large, and the power of applying them to Imperial Purposes. Indeed, the answer of the English Commissioners, as I have just recited, is one of the best that can be given to the repeated question I have already mentioned.

“ With

“ With respect, Sir, to the fate of the Propositions in 1785, so much spoken of, the Commercial benefits then tendered to Ireland were rejected on the same mistaken grounds that the House of Commons set their face against the present measure—They thought that the fourth Proposition encroached upon their Independence, and in consequence refused great commercial advantages. This consideration, I think, brings the question between the two countries to a fair issue. Is Ireland to be considered in a better situation with her present separate Legislature, and deprived of these manifold commercial advantages; or with her Legislature incorporated with that of Great Britain, with the full enjoyment of all those commercial benefits, and the various other advantages in a view of power, consequence, and respectability, as must result to Ireland, when thoroughly united with Great Britain?—This is the true question to be considered by the Irish: for my part, I have not a doubt upon the point—the latter situation would be decided to the advantage of Ireland.

“ Great stress, Sir, has also been laid, by an Hon. Gentleman on the Settlement in 1782, which has been called a Final Adjustment. I shall not cavil about words, but I contend that much of the argument founded upon that proceeding, as
used

used by the Hon. Gentleman, was thrown away, as inapplicable to the present question. Indeed, I might call it on his part as fighting with a shadow.—The question at issue, Sir, I must again repeat it, is between the benefits and advantages, take them all in all, derivable to Ireland from her present separate Legislature, or those from an incorporated Union; and I must again protest against the idea, that any thing in the present proceedings is any way hostile or derogatory to the acknowledged Independence of Ireland. The very mode of putting the present question to their Parliament, implies its Legislative Independence.

“ Much, if not the chief stress of the arguments urged by those who oppose this measure, has been laid on the opposition which has been made to it in the Parliament of Ireland. But when circumstances are attended to, I cannot refrain from stating, that this view of the subject is given in very erroneous colours. Two estates of the Parliament of Ireland, the King and the Lords, have pointedly expressed their desire that the subject should be entertained and considered; and the contrary opinion has been carried only by a very narrow majority in the House of Commons. Under such circumstances, it is idle to talk of this as a solemn decision of Parliament

liament. But if it had been entitled to that appellation, it would not have altered my opinion as to the propriety of this House considering the question, and taking the most effectual means of bringing it again and again under the consideration of the Irish nation. Sound reason and good sense will ultimately prevail; and I cannot help auguring well to the ultimate success of the measure, as essential to the happiness of Ireland, when I contemplate the clamour and violence by which the consideration of it has been resisted. These are not the weapons by which truth and solid reasoning maintain their empire over the hearts and understandings of men.—Cool consideration, and sober reasoning, are the arms by which the cause of truth is supported, and I have not a doubt that these weapons, properly used, will ultimately succeed against all the clamour and prejudice that can be adduced against them.

“ I believe there is no candid and rational man who is at present disposed to dispute, that a system of excise is the least expensive and most effectual mode by which a great revenue can be collected in any country. But it is in the memory of living men, and within the reading of us all, with what obloquy the first authors of that great system were loaded on its first introduction.

But

But the solid understanding of mankind at last prevailed.

“ In this, as in almost every other part of this subject, I must refer the recollection of the House to what passed in Scotland on occasion of the Union of that kingdom with England.

“ When Gentlemen pretended to think lightly of the sacrifices of Scotland compared with those of Ireland, let them recollect, that Ireland had not for many centuries been free or independent of England, but that Scotland *never* was completely subdued or under the control of England;—that Scotland gave up, what Ireland *cannot* give up, an independent Parliament of King, Lords, and Commons;—and that Scotland gave up, what Ireland *cannot* give up, an *independent and separate* CROWN!

“ The Scots undoubtedly surrendered these honours at the time with reluctance, and evinced the greatest hostility to the Union, until experience had made her acquainted with its blessings. I cannot, Sir, help noticing the vast unpopularity of the Duke of Queensberry and other Commissioners in favour of the Union, while the zeal and activity of the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Belhaven

Belhaven were the theme of every tongue. The Duke of Queensberry, the nobleman who took the most active part in carrying the measure into effect, and was Her Majesty's Commissioner for the purpose, narrowly escaped, in several instances, with his life. The Duke of Hamilton, the Patriot of that day, the most violent opposer of the measure, was applauded to the skies for his conduct by the populace—they regularly chaired him from his apartments in Holyrood House to the Parliament House, just as the Dublin mob lately did the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, exclaiming, in their mad career: "God bless your Grace!" But those who had been so much reviled, and had so nobly withstood the storms and tempests of the times, had the consolation to live and witness the popularity of that measure for which they were condemned. The Union soon became so popular, that the Pretender, having pledged himself to a repeal of the Act of Union, excited such a fermentation against him, that he was obliged to expunge this promise from his manifesto!

"This change of sentiment happened in the year 1715, eight years after the Union; and it ought to afford a salutary lesson to those false patriots who chuse to rest their characters and fame on the short-lived clamours of the day; and

it ought to afford a heartfelt consolation to those who have the magnanimity to disdain such mean and paltry arts, trusting that their real patriotism, founded on a consideration of the true interests of their country, will not fail ultimately to secure to them that solid and permanent fame which is alone worthy of possessing.

“Another argument, Sir, I wish to submit to your consideration in favour of the Union. If it be true, as insisted upon by Mr. O'Connor, in his evidence, that the people of England, according to their present form of Government, have no cause of complaint, when compared with the state and sufferings of the people of Ireland, then it consequently follows, that an Union between the two nations, founded on principles of common freedom, and common interest, will at once remove every cause of grievance on the part of the people of Ireland. By the participation of the freedom of Britons, by the full enjoyment of all the privileges attached to a member of such an honourable community, the Government of this country endeavours to destroy the hopes of the enemy, and to strengthen and consolidate the interests of the empire. If it be true, as generally acknowledged, that the poor of Ireland experience all the miseries concomitant to a state of want and wretchedness, then it

it follows, that their participation of the privileges of Britons, will arouse and animate to laudable exertions that useful description of our fellow-subjects in the sister kingdom. That liberty which awakened the commercial enterprise of Scotland—that liberty which expanded its genius in the most honourable pursuits—that liberty which confirmed every sentiment which can dignify human nature, will, Sir, I am sure, have the same happy influence on the people of Ireland, connected with us by the dearest reciprocal obligations.

“ There are certain gentlemen, who had the hardihood to maintain, that the advocates for an Union were enemies to the peace of Ireland; but sure I am, Sir, that no arguments can be more futile or absurd. The introduction of that freedom into the various classes of Ireland, which was the admiration, and seemed the panegyric of all Europe, was no indication of the hostility of the Government of Great Britain. It would be a partnership, which would diffuse and extend its political and commercial advantages to the remotest corners of the globe—it would soon dissipate all idle and illiberal jealousies—it would allay the apprehensions of the real friends of both countries; and, by an equality of rights, infuse into the imperial spirit that noble emulation of mind which is the source of every excellence.

“ There

"There are no sinister arts, as some malignantly insinuate, adopted for the attainment of the grand object of our discussion. There are no measures of compulsion, as the enemies of the measure affirm, in the contemplation of those in power. I wish, Sir, to convince, not to intimidate the people of Ireland. The system of terror, so often enforced by the common enemy, thank God, is no part of the policy of the British Government. Adopting expedients of lenity and persuasion, we address ourselves to the liberality and wisdom of the Irish nation. They know the sincerity of our friendship; they know also the bitter malignity of that foreign power, which, like the rattlesnake, first endeavours to charm and then destroy. But, Sir, I thought that the eyes of every British subject were at last opened to the treachery of the common enemy of mankind; and sorry am I to find, that the very enemy now so generally execrated, compliments the people of Ireland, by alledging, that there is a spirit of credulity in the Irish system, which will admit of the grossest deception from those who have sworn to overthrow any government founded in justice and humanity.

"With regard to the final adjustment of the year 1782, it was a misapplication of terms to call it final. It was also to little purpose to re-

cur to the opinion of Mr. Grattan, or the sentiments he expressed on the subject of that arrangement, and the debates that preceded it. Mr. Grattan, on that occasion, was known to have been only the mouth-piece of the Volunteers. The whole of the business was evidently done in a hurry, and could only be considered as a temporary expedient to serve the purposes and exigencies of the moment, not as a matter to which stability or permanency was likely to be attached. However that might be, the Parliament of Ireland had afterwards succeeded in obtaining every thing it desired ; and he was so far from denying a particle of its independence, that he admitted it in its fullest extent, and even founded upon it no small part of his present arguments. Sir, had the adjustment in 1782, not taken place, the situation in which Ireland would then stand, might have afforded an argument against the present measure, because then the Sister Parliament could not, in strictness, be said to treat fairly ; but its independence, at the present time, gave it the same competency to treat that was possessed by the Parliament of Great Britain.

“ If, however, upon reflection, the Irish Legislature should not be convinced of the utility and necessity of the projected Union, there was
an

an end of the plan, and it must retain that degree of independence which it preferred to the numerous and important advantages which were held out to it. The division in Ireland, I admit, was hitherto so apparently hostile to the proposal, that it was nearly decided that it should not be even entertained or discussed. But Gentlemen seemed to insinuate an apprehension, that it was to be intimidated and bullied into it. The Administration of this Country, in the most full and unqualified manner, disclaimed the idea of any such intentions. Whatever might be the general opinion, or the prejudice against it, now in the heat and violence of the moment, arising from national pride, and a variety of other motives, I make no doubt but, were the measure adopted, in less than eight years that country, like Scotland, would be fully reconciled and convinced of its utility.

“ Among other arguments against the legislative Union, was an appeal to the national pride of Ireland. By those strenuous opponents of the measure, it was alledged, that the Parliament and People of Ireland would be degraded. Here, again, I must refer, Sir, to those stubborn facts recorded in the page of history. By a happy combination of wisdom and humanity, the Hierarchy was overturned, and an empire established
on

on principles of sound policy. The Prince who accomplished this grand object certainly merits the highest encomium for the operations of justice and humanity. But I wish, Sir, to put it to the conscience and feelings of those conversant with history, if they think that the various interests were injured or degraded by the appellation or privileges of Englishmen? The people of the Seven United States or Nations were neither debased nor enslaved by the consolidation of their interests under one imperial management or direction. The Welchman, a brave and generous character, neither feels himself enslaved nor degraded by a consolidation of interest and freedom; and sure I am, Sir, that the Scotchman is actuated by too noble and generous principles to entertain for a moment such an opinion. From these facts, I hope, therefore, I may assume, as a natural conclusion, that as former parts of the empire found neither injury nor inconvenience in an Union, that Ireland, as soon as prejudice and passion have subsided, will be equally harmonious to the happiness of the community. Such a state of Union would appear invincible to the common enemy, who, in the career of his conquests, not only robs individuals of their property, but perverts and destroys the salutary institutions of the nation with which he pretends to fraternise. A
national

national mind, united according to the principles now recommended, and a public force thus concentrated, would be capable of repelling the attacks of the most formidable enemy, however strongly impelled by the new doctrines, and however animated by the fertile genius of innovation.

“ I have already had occasion to advert, in one point of view to the argument, that we should proceed no farther in the business after the House of Commons of Ireland had expressed its repugnance to it in so unequivocal a manner. I have only farther to say, that no decision of that House shall deter me, and the Government of Great Britain, from telling and explaining to the people and Parliament of Ireland, in as much detail as possible, what the proposals were which we were desirous to submit to their cool and dispassionate consideration.— The Irish House of Commons has expressed what they think of an Union: and it is our business to tell what we think of it also; for this reason it is, that I strenuously contend for going into the Committee, that the whole people of both kingdoms may know what is the real basis on which we wish to treat. In this way only can we hope to baffle the various misrepresentations which are industriously propagated on this momentous business. I am the more desirous of it, because

cause I contend, the Hon. Gentleman, who lay so much stress on the decision of the Commons of Ireland, carry the conclusion from that circumstance much farther than they are warranted. Even the Irish House of Commons have not said that they will never agitate the business again. It would indeed have been strange if they had done so. After the decision in the House of Commons, an attempt was made to carry a resolution for setting the question aside altogether, by an Hon. Member (Mr. G. Ponsonby) whose motion the House thought proper to reject. [*It was here remarked across the table, that the motion was not rejected, but withdrawn.*] This difference in the term, Sir, makes but very little alteration in the state of the fact; for it is very well known, that gentlemen, warmly embarked in strong party questions, are not very likely to withdraw them, unless the disposition of the House indicates that, if pressed, they will be rejected—such, no doubt, is the case in the instance alluded to. The Honourable Gentleman succeeded in his opposition to the Address, but he failed in the Motion with which he attempted to follow it.

“All that is at present proposed, I again state, is to give the people and Parliament of Ireland time and opportunity to know and consider what

the English Parliament is willing to share with them, without attempting the smallest interference with their independence.

“Many objections, Sir, have been made to the time of bringing forward these propositions, as if it were the worst and most unseasonable that could possibly be selected. It is however, agreed on all hands, that the situation of Ireland is truly alarming; that it is threatened with the greatest dangers; and that to avert them requires the fullest attention, and the utmost exertions of Government. The only difference of opinion, therefore, is, with respect to the means by which the evils can be remedied. The Administration of this Country proposes an Union, as the only sure and effectual means of affording it tranquillity at home and security from external attacks.—On the other side of the House, though an Union was objected to, no other remedy has been offered. For my part, I conceive that there is a peculiar propriety in bringing forward the proposal at this very critical time, when the reports of both Houses of Parliament in Ireland afforded irrefragable demonstration, that there still exists amongst them a deep and formidable conspiracy to separate that kingdom from Great Britain, and totally destroy all friendly connection between them.

What

What then are the best means to meet and defeat the ends of this conspiracy, and disappoint the hopes of those by whom it is supported and fomented? I know of no mode so effectually doing so, but to cement and consolidate, into one powerful and irresistible body, the strength of the whole Empire, by an Union of the two Legislatures.

“The similarity of the circumstances induces me again to recur to the opposition, so frequently and strenuously given, to the proposal of an Union with Scotland. In various periods of our History attempts had been made to effectuate this favourite object, and as frequently frustrated. I shall shortly glance over the history of these attempts, beginning with that of Henry VIII. who offered his daughter Mary to James V. of Scotland, holding out such inducements as the Scottish King was inclined to listen to; but the plan was defeated by the intrigues of the French and the Popish faction. Edward VI. of England, in pursuance of his father's design, offered himself to Mary Queen of Scotland; and though it was agreed to by the Parliament of that country, the interference of the same faction rendered this treaty as fruitless as the former. The plan was again renewed in the reign of James I. and though Articles of Union were agreed to by

Commissioners of both countries assembled at Westminster, and ratified conditionally by the Scotch Parliament, yet the jealousy of the High Churchmen at that time caused them to be rejected in England. The plan was again brought forward in the reign of Charles I. but ended in some unavailing conferences amongst the Commissioners appointed to manage it. In the reign of William and Mary, the proposition for an Union came from the Scotch Convention, and, on a recommendation from the Crown, the English House of Peers passed a Bill for appointing Commissioners for treating of an Union of the two Kingdoms, which Bill was thrown out by the Commons. Thus the matter rested till the reign of Queen Anne, at whose accession the project also failed, through the High Church influence. But some reverses in the progress of the war, and some events which took place in Scotland, made England take the alarm, and be as anxious for the accomplishment of the Union, as it was before forward in rejecting it. And here I wish it to be recollected, than when propositions to this effect failed in Scotland, it always happened through French influence and French intrigue. I remember a curious simile, which was urged as an argument against the Union in the Reign of James I. to shew that Scotland must be the sufferer, "If a rich field," said

said one of the Commissioners, "lie next to a poor field, the latter must be the loser, as all the cattle would not fail to go into the richer pasture."—After the Union was effected, many, no doubt, did from time to time come into the richer field, without, however, any injury being sustained by the fields from which they departed. It appeared then, that what first induced the people of England to become zealous for, and to urge an Union with Scotland, was to prevent the bad effects of party and French intrigue in that country.

"What was then the situation of Scotland, now became, by various accidents, that of Ireland. France labours by every means to form a connection in that country, and has in a great measure succeeded, as recent and unfortunate events testify: an Union is proposed by Great Britain, as the surest way to put an end to this dangerous conspiracy, by a consolidation of the whole powers of the Empire.

"Those who most admire the transactions which took place in 1782, must admit, that no arrangement has yet taken place adequate to the cure of those diseases which threaten the destruction of Ireland; and those who were particularly concerned in the settlement of that degree
of

of Irish independence alluded to, had uniformly avowed, that something further was necessary, for the reciprocity of interests between the two countries so ardently wished for by the friends of both. If this deficiency of social compact between Great Britain and Ireland be acknowledged, as a recurrence to the proceedings of the times will verify, then it follows, that it was in the contemplation of those in power at that time, to advance, as soon as convenient, to the completion of this grand principle. It is needless to state reasons, or conjectures, for the delay of this final adjustment of amity: a variety of circumstances contributed to it; but I have no hesitation, Sir, in saying, that if such a plan as that intended had been discussed and confirmed by the Parliaments of both countries, it is more than probable, that we would not now have to lament the acts of outrage and rebellion which have so recently convulsed and despoiled our sister kingdom. It was this lamentable defect in the compact that excited the turbulent and obnoxious of Ireland—it was this lamentable defect that gave rise to the most dangerous passions and animosities—it in fact presented Ireland with more resentments to satiate, and less authority to controul. While, then, we deplore the late abominable excesses, it is our duty to prevent the return of the sanguinary scenes, by an Union of national interest,

likely

likely to renounce and command the affections of the people.

“ I again, Sir, affirm, that in any thing which has fallen from me for the purpose of elucidating my arguments, I mean to cast no imputation on the Parliament of Ireland. I maintain, that with respect to the Catholics, they are under the influence of prejudice; I know, at the same time, that it is a prejudice inseparable from the nature of their situation. Attempts were made to shew, that the exclusions under which the Catholics of this country laboured, did not augur well for the Catholics of Ireland, when they should come under our Legislation. Here again I am at issue with gentlemen who advance this hypothesis; and I do most sincerely maintain, that an Union is likely to prove advantageous to the Catholics of both countries, as under the same Legislature there is every probability, that after some time the same measure of indulgence will be equally distributed to both, The Irish will stand a chance of being soon put upon the same footing with the English; and should it ever be found prudent wholly to improve the condition of the great majority of the Irish nation, the English Catholics might expect to be no longer under any restraints. But after all, I am of opinion, there is no comparison between the state of the Catholics

in

in the two kingdoms; for if in England considerations of policy have hitherto imposed some restrictions on the Catholics, I am fully persuaded that they do not think their interests neglected, or that any sentiments of animosity, jealousy, or discord, are entertained against them. They may, and naturally do regret the exclusions to which they are subjected; but they never, for a moment, entertain a thought that there exists against them a hostile spirit, either in the legislative or executive government of this country. Nobody will venture to assert, that such is the feeling of the Catholics of Ireland.

“ If any Irishman should unfortunately prefer French fraternity to British liberty, I would most earnestly impress upon his mind the horrors and devastations of the Continent. Should he entertain a doubt of French rapine and murder, let him cast his eyes on Brabant, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, and Egypt.—In these miserable countries, he would find the unparalleled effects of the fertile genius of innovation and reform—he would there find innumerable examples of a violation of faith—he might there trace the agents of villainy starting from one extreme of iniquity to another, scoffing and scorning justice and humanity, and, in the very face of heaven, defying
divine

divine vengeance. These are the bitter effects of French fraternity, and by which its miserable victims have been sunk in agonies of confusion and despair.

"I beg pardon, Sir, for having troubled the House at so great length (two hours and twenty minutes); but the observations advanced on the other side, and the circumstances of the case, require that I should take a comprehensive view of the whole subject; and from every consideration I am induced, Sir, to vote for your leaving the Chair."

**COPY of the RESOLUTIONS, as amended
and passed by the HOUSE OF COMMONS,
Feb. 14, 1799.**

Mr. Douglas (according to order) reported from the Committee of the whole House, to whom it was referred to consider further of his Majesty's most gracious Message of the 22d day of January last, the Resolutions which the Committee had directed him to report to the House; which he read in his place.

RESOLVED,

That the said Report be now brought up.

Mr. Douglas accordingly delivered the Resolutions in at the table, where the same were read, and are as followeth, viz.

RESOLVED,

That it is the opinion of this Committee, That in order to promote and secure the essential interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and to consolidate the strength, power, and resources of the British empire, it will be advisable to concur in such measures as may best tend to unite the two kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland into one kingdom, in such manner, and on such terms and conditions, as may be established by acts of the respective parliaments of his Majesty's said kingdoms.

RESOLVED,

RESOLVED,

That it is the opinion of this Committee, That it would be fit to propose, as the first article, to serve as a basis of the said Union, that the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland shall, upon a day to be agreed upon, be united into one kingdom, by the name of "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland."

RESOLVED,

That it is the opinion of this Committee, That, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, that the succession to the monarchy and the Imperial crown of the said United Kingdom shall continue limited and settled in the same manner as the Imperial crown of the said kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland now stands limited and settled, according to the existing laws, and to the terms of the Union between England and Scotland.

RESOLVED,

That it is the opinion of this Committee, That, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, that the said United Kingdom be represented in one and the same Parliament, to be stiled, "The Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland;" and that such a number of Lords spiritual and temporal, and such a number of members in the House of Commons, as shall be hereafter agreed upon by acts of the respective Parliaments as aforesaid, shall sit and vote in the said Parliament on the part of Ireland, and shall be summoned, chosen, and returned, in such manner as shall be fixed by an act of Parliament of Ireland previous to the said Union; and that every member, hereafter to sit and vote in the said Parliament of the United Kingdom, shall, until the said Parlia-

ment shall otherwise provide, take and subscribe the same oaths, and make the same declarations, as are by law required to be taken, subscribed, and made, by the Members of the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland.

RESOLVED,

That it is the opinion of this Committee, That, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, that the churches of England and Ireland, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, shall be preserved as now by law established.

RESOLVED,

That it is the opinion of this Committee, That, for the same purpose it would be fit to propose, that his Majesty's subjects in Ireland shall, at all times hereafter, be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing, in respect of trade and navigation, in all ports and places belonging to Great Britain, and in all cases with respect to which treaties shall be made by his Majesty, his heirs or successors, with any foreign power, as his Majesty's subjects in Great Britain.—That no duty shall be imposed on the import or export between Great Britain and Ireland of any articles now duty-free; and that on other articles there shall be established, for a time to be limited, such a moderate rate of equal duties as shall, previous to the Union, be agreed upon, and approved by, the respective Parliaments; subject, after the expiration of such limited time, to be diminished equally with respect to both kingdoms, but in no case to be increased:—That all articles, which may at any time hereafter be imported into Great Britain from foreign parts, shall be importable through either kingdom into the other, subject to the like duties

duties and regulations as if the same were imported directly from foreign parts :—That where any articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture, of either kingdom, are subject to any internal duty in one kingdom, such countervailing duties (over and above any duties on import to be fixed as aforesaid) shall be imposed as shall be necessary to prevent any inequality in that respect :—And that all other matters of trade and commerce, other than the foregoing, and than such others as may, before the Union, be specially agreed upon for the due encouragement of the agriculture and manufactures of the respective kingdoms, shall remain to be regulated from time to time by the United Parliament.

RESOLVED,

That it is the opinion of this Committee, That, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, that the Charge arising from the Payment of the Interest, or Sinking Fund for the reduction of the Principal, of the Debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively ;—That, for a number of years to be limited, the future ordinary expences of the United Kingdom, in peace or war, shall be defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland jointly, according to such proportions as shall be established by the respective parliaments previous to the Union : and that, after the expiration of the time to be so limited, the proportion shall not be liable to be varied, except according to such rules and principles as shall be in like manner agreed upon previous to the Union.

RESOLVED,

That it is the opinion of this Committee, That, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, That all laws in
force,

force, at the time of the Union, and all the Courts of Civil or Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, within the respective kingdoms, shall remain, as now by law established; within the same, subject only to such alterations or regulations, from time to time, as circumstances may appear, to the Parliament of the United Kingdom, to require.

The First Resolution of the Committee, being read a second time, was agreed to by the House.

The Second Resolution of the Committee, being read a second time;

A motion was made, and the question being put, That the further consideration of the said Report be adjourned to this day three months;

It passed in the negative.

Then the said Resolution was agreed to by the House.

The Third and Fourth Resolutions of the Committee, being read a second time, were agreed to by the House.

The Fifth Resolution of the Committee, being read a second time, was, with several amendments thereunto, agreed to by the House, and is as followeth, viz.

RESOLVED,

That, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, That the Churches of that part of Great Britain called England, and of that part of Great Britain called Scotland, and of Ireland, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government

government thereof, shall be preserved as now by law established.

The Sixth Resolution of the Committee, being read a second time, was agreed to by the House.

The Seventh Resolution of the Committee, being read a second time, was, with several amendments thereunto, agreed to by the House, and is as followeth, viz.

RESOLVED,

That, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, That the charge arising from the payment of the interest, or sinking fund for the reduction of the principal, of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively:—That, for a number of years to be limited, the future expences of the United Kingdom, in peace or war, shall be defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland jointly, according to such proportions as shall be established by the respective parliaments previous to the Union; and that, after the expiration of the time to be so limited, the mode of jointly defraying such expences shall be regulated according to such rules and principles as shall be in like manner agreed upon previous to the Union, for the purpose of establishing gradually an uniform system of taxation through every part of the United Kingdom.

The subsequent Resolution of the Committee, being read a second time, was agreed to by the House, and

ORDERED,

That the said Resolutions be communicated to the Lords at a conference, and their concurrence desired thereto.

ORDERED,

ORDERED,

That a conference be desired with the Lords, respecting the means of improving and perpetuating the connection between Great Britain and Ireland, and of augmenting and consolidating the strength, power, and resources of the British Empire.

ORDERED,

That the Earl Temple do go to the Lords, and desire the said conference.



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ORDERED,

That a conference be desired with the Lords respecting the means of improving and bettering the commerce between Great Britain and Ireland, and of any other and consolidating the strength, power, and resources of the British Empire.

ORDERED,

That the said Conference be desired.

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HENRY ADDINGTON.

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S U B S T A N C E

OF THE

S P E E C H

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY ADDINGTON, *K*

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON THE 12TH OF FEBRUARY, 1799,

IN

THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE,

TO WHOM

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS MESSAGE

OF THE 22D JANUARY,

RELATIVE TO IRELAND,

WAS REFERRED.

—D U B L I N:—

PRINTED FOR J. MILLIKEN, 32, GRAFTON-STREET.

1799.

S U B S T A N C E
OF THE
S P E E C H,
Ec. Ec.

Mr. DOUGLAS in the Chair;

THE Motion was—"That, in order to promote
" and secure the essential interests of Great Britain
" and Ireland, and to consolidate the strength,
" power, and resources of the British Empire,
" it will be advisable to concur in such measures
" as may best tend to unite the two Kingdoms
" of Great Britain and Ireland into one Kingdom,
" in such manner, and on such terms and con-
" ditions, as may be established by Acts of
" the respective Parliaments of his Majesty's said
" Kingdoms."

The SPEAKER said,

THE occasions were few on which he was disposed to take any other part in the debates and proceedings of the House, than that which was called for by his official duty; on the present important question, however, he thought it incumbent upon him to express his opinion by his vote; and, exhausted as the subject had been, he hoped for the indulgence of the Committee, whilst he stated the grounds upon which that vote would be given.

His

His view of the subject was, indeed, very different from that of his Honourable Friend (Mr. Bankes) who had declared it to be his opinion, that the situation of Ireland was such, as to render it not only inexpedient, but unsafe, to coalesce with her. Now it was upon the situation of that country, at the present moment, that he founded his conviction, not merely of the expediency, for of that he had long been satisfied, but of the urgent and pressing necessity of the measure in question; which, though considered by his Honourable Friend as in no degree tending to remedy those evils, which were universally acknowledged, he was convinced would, in the first instance, palliate, and ultimately eradicate them; would at once have the effect of allaying irritation and animosity, and ere long, he trusted, of extinguishing them for ever.

His Honourable Friend was also disposed to think, that the Legislature of Ireland was fully adequate to the redress of those grievances which require parliamentary interposition, and to the restoration of internal tranquillity. This supposition unfortunately was not warranted by experience: to the redress of some of the grievances complained of, and to the removal of some of the causes of irritation, the Speaker said its adequacy could not be doubted; but there were radical and inherent evils, closely interwoven with the state and condition of Ireland, and with the temper, the feelings, and the prejudices of the great body of the people, which, though they were not occasioned by the separation of the two Legislatures, he was convinced an incorporation of those Legislatures could alone effectually remove.

It

It was a melancholy, but, he feared, an incontrovertible truth, that the state of Ireland had, at no period of its history, with which we are acquainted, been such as to afford satisfaction to any mind, that could justly appreciate the blessings of a well-ordered, a flourishing, and a happy condition of civil society. The bounty of Providence had, indeed, been displayed in that country by a fertile soil, and by abundant means of internal improvement and prosperity; its inhabitants had not been less distinguished than those of Great Britain, in corresponding stations of life, for eloquence, for literary and scientific acquirements, and for those talents and exertions, which have established the naval and military renown of the British empire. Their form of government was the same as our own, but it wanted its true characteristics; it did not, like ours, bestow and receive general confidence and protection: for it was not, like ours, connected by ties, which he trusted were here indissoluble, with the obvious interests, the feelings and the sentiments of the great body of the people.

The truth was, that, in contemplating the state of Ireland, even at a period of apparent tranquillity, it was impossible not to discover those seeds of animosity, which have unhappily been matured by circumstances into insurrection and rebellion. To account, in a great degree, for this animosity, it might, perhaps, be sufficient to state, that a large majority of the people were Catholics, and that four-fifths of the property was in the hands of Protestants, who are alone legally competent to hold the high offices of state, and to perform the functions of legislation. Hereditary feelings and resentments had, besides, contributed

tributed to keep these elements of internal discord in almost constant agitation. The extensive confiscations which took place at the commencement of the last century, when, after the suppression of the rebellion by Lord Mountjoy, almost the whole province of Ulster became forfeited to the Crown; the creation of numerous boroughs by James the First; which in effect transferred the legislative authority from the Catholics to the Protestants; the Act of Settlement, and explanation; the severities exercised by Cromwell; the event of the battle of the Boyne, and the surrender of Limerick (though the articles of capitulation in the latter instance prove, what was indeed manifested by the whole tenour of his conduct, that a spirit of intolerance and persecution made no part of the character of King William;) the code of Popery Laws, which, however necessary for the security of persons of one persuasion, must be admitted to have operated with great severity on those of the other: all these circumstances could not fail to recur forcibly to the minds of the Catholics, to keep alive the sensations which they successively excited, and to make them look with irritation at power, when they saw it lodged in the hands of those whom they considered as their oppressors; whose religious opinions they conceived to be heretical, and who were in possession of that property which the Catholics supposed had been unjustly wrested from their ancestors.

On the other hand, the horrible excesses to which the vindictive fury and bigotry of the Catholics were carried in 1641; the dreadful use they made of the power, which they acquired upon the usurpation of James the Second (for the government of James the
Second

Second in Ireland was an usurpation after he had abdicated the throne of England); the forfeitures, the sequestrations, and the attainders, which then took place, had necessarily engendered those sentiments of apprehension and distrust in the Protestants of that country, which occasioned, and appeared to justify, the code of penalties and disabilities which was enacted at the commencement of the present century.

Such, he feared, was a true representation of the state and temper of Ireland; and he was convinced that no remedy could be effectual, but such as would strike at the root of the evil, would abate the struggles for power, would remove the impediments to civilization and internal improvement, and by which the Protestant and Catholic inhabitants of the two countries would become one people, under the superintending authority and protection of an united and imperial Parliament.

The Speaker then stated that about the year 1778, a material change of system took place: the extinction of the hopes of the House of Stuart, and the peaceable demeanour of the Roman Catholics, led to a repeal of the penal code, which bore upon them with peculiar hardship; and they obtained from the justice of the Irish Parliament full security to their property, complete personal liberty, and a perfect toleration of their religion. A wise and liberal policy induced the Legislature of this country to relax, at the same period, the strictness of the Act of Navigation, and of our colonial system; and an unqualified participation of the foreign trade of Great Britain was accordingly given to his Majesty's subjects in Ireland.

Further concessions, of a political nature, were made in the year 1782. The controul of the Privy Council, under what was called Poyning's Law, was abolished; and the act of the sixth of George the First, affirming the power and authority of the King, by and with the consent of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, to make laws and statutes to bind the kingdom and people of Ireland, was repealed. The independence of the Parliament of Ireland was thus fully and completely established; and, in the subsequent year, the appellant jurisdiction of the British House of Peers from the Courts of Law in that country was done away. Without calling in question the wisdom or expediency of the measures last described, it would not, he trusted, be thought disrespectful or improper to observe, for the observation was warranted by a Resolution of that House, that, however sufficient they might be for the removal of the grievances of which Ireland then complained, they were defective, and incomplete for the purpose of adjusting the relation in which the two countries were thenceforward to stand, as branches of the same empire; that they loosened the ancient ties of connection, and that they substituted no others in their place.

Such a state of things might possibly have subsisted for a time, during a period of tranquillity; but it was ill suited to bear the agitation of that tempest, which soon convulsed a considerable part of Europe, and extended its malignant and desolating principles to the sister kingdom. For its influence and its ravages it there unfortunately found an ample field: there were wanting in that country (as he had before stated), those links by which the body of the people should

should be connected with the Government: there were not, in the degree at least that could be wished, those ties between the higher and the great mass of the lower orders of the community, which are, perhaps, the best security for internal peace and tranquillity. In many parts of the country the non-residence of proprietors, and the intervention of other persons and other interests, obstructed that communication and intercourse between landlord and tenant which were equally advantageous to both, and to the country at large. The predominance of numbers, as had been already mentioned, was on the part of the Catholics, that of property on the part of the Protestants. The new philosophy had taught the dreadful lesson that was to be derived from such a disproportion: religious bigotry, for the first time, came in aid of principles always formidable, and aggravated the danger arising from the physical strength of numbers, and the new doctrines of the Rights of Man.

With the particulars of the convulsion that had recently taken place, all were too well acquainted. He would not now enter into them, but confine himself to a consideration of the various plans which had been proposed for restoring tranquillity to Ireland, and for perpetuating her connection with Great Britain. Of these, Catholic Emancipation, as it is called; the re-enactment of the Popery laws, in the whole or in part; and an incorporation of the Legislature of the two countries, had each its separate advocates.

The objections to Catholic Emancipation, coupled as it was, according to the general opinion of its advocates, with Parliamentary Reform, were, in the lan-

guage of Mr. Foster, whose name he could not mention but with sentiments of respect, " that it had the
 " tendency to give the influence to numbers, and to
 " take it from property, and to overwhelm the rights
 " of the Protestants of Ireland."

The Speaker acknowledged, that he was anxious for the removal of the most obnoxious grounds of complaint against what was termed the Protestant Ascendancy; but he sought for the attainment of this desirable object, by no other means than those of a Legislative Union; and not at the hazard of those formidable consequences, which Catholic Emancipation, with all that belonged to it, was, in his opinion, calculated to produce. Indeed, if the Catholics were true to their conscience and their creed, the Protestant establishment must be exposed by such a change to immediate, and, perhaps, inevitable danger; and the state of the Protestants under such circumstances, be rendered worse than that of the Catholics during any period of the present and preceding century. If actuated by interest and passion (by which he did not suppose that they were likely to be more or less influenced than others), they could not be supposed to possess, without exercising it, the power of recovering that property of which they conceived their ancestors to have been wrongfully deprived; and if, under the present circumstances, the inconveniences arising from the discordant proceedings of distinct Legislatures have been regarded with anxiety and apprehension, he could not but conceive such sensations would be applicable, in a far stronger degree, if political power was possessed by those, between whom, and the Parliament of

of Great Britain, a greater variety of differences from various causes, might be supposed to arise, and on points less capable of reconciliation and adjustment.

His Honourable Friend who spoke last, he observed, thought that it would be expedient for the Parliament of Ireland, to tread back some of the steps that had been taken, and to re-enact the whole code of the Popery laws (the repeal of which had been the subject of such general encomium and satisfaction) against the Catholics, who did not produce certificates of their peaceable and loyal conduct during the late rebellion; and to provide that those by whom such certificates were produced, should be admitted to all the rights and privileges enjoyed by Protestants; but he had also intimated such an opinion of the Catholics, as to leave little hope that many of them would be entitled to the benefit of such a distinction.

That disaffection had spread widely amongst that body, could not, he feared, be contested; that it had been so nearly universal, as some persons had imagined, he thought there were solid grounds to deny. Many individuals of the yeomanry and other volunteer corps, and most of those of whom the militia regiments consisted, were of that persuasion; and yet they had in general manifested the utmost degree of ardour and alacrity in resisting the internal, as well as the foreign enemies of their country. He was, however, concerned to think that, on the part of a large proportion of the Catholics, strong prejudices against this country must be confessed to exist; but he was convinced that they arose, in a great degree, from the persuasion that the Protestant ascendancy was

was principally maintained by British connection, and British power.

He said that the proceeding which had been recommended by his Honourable Friend, would, if his advice was followed, appear to imply that the rebellion had been carried on by Catholics only; a supposition which the accounts received from the seat of it, and the characters and confessions of many of the United Irishmen, would effectually disprove. The proposed discrimination would, he was persuaded, if adopted, add fuel to the flame, and create new sources of dissension and hostility. It should besides be observed, that many who, from motives of hypocrisy, or of regard to their personal safety, had not given way to the malignant suggestions of their own minds, by taking up arms against the Government, would thereby be countenanced; whereas, in other parts, that had been the scene of insurrection and rebellion, the Catholic, who had yielded to a momentary, though an unjustifiable impulse, would, by one rash step, be excluded for ever. This was not a mode, according to his opinion, of healing the divisions, and of establishing the tranquillity of Ireland: it could not have the effect of allaying the irritation of the Catholics, nor of conveying to the Protestants a greater degree of confidence and security.

The Speaker then adverted to the measure of 1793, by which the competency to enjoy and exercise the elective franchise, and to hold certain offices, was afforded to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and to the opinion which had been stated concerning it, from an authority to which he had before referred. "For that measure," Mr. Foster had said, "that he could

“ could not thank the Irish Minister, though he did
 “ for many others ; for that from his soul he confi-
 “ dered it as the prelude and forerunner of the
 “ overthrow of the Protestant establishment in Ire-
 “ land ; ” — “ that it hazarded the Hanover succession
 “ and the connection with Great Britain.”

From these opinions he was far from dissenting ; he
 had quoted them, not only to mark the danger which
 was apprehended from the proceedings of 1793, by
 a Gentleman known to be friendly to the Protestant
 establishment, and to the connection with Great Bri-
 tain, but for the purpose of founding upon them an
 argument in favour of the measure in question. If
 the predictions of Mr. Foster were well founded, and
 he confessed that they accorded in a great degree with
 his own sentiments and apprehensions, he saw no
 means by which their accomplishment could possibly
 be averted, but by a legislative Union, or by a re-
 newal of the restrictions and disabilities which were
 done away by the Act of 1793. Of the former mea-
 sure Mr. Foster had very recently disapproved, and it
 could not therefore but be supposed that it was by the
 latter only, that he could hope to prevent those cala-
 mities, which, he was convinced, were deprecated by
 no one more anxiously and sincerely, than by that
 Honourable Gentleman himself.

He would, however, acknowledge that if he were
 obliged to make an option between a recurrence to so
 much of the system of the Popery laws as was repealed
 at that time, or to Catholic Emancipation, coupled
 with Parliamentary Reform, he should conceive that
 he best consulted the tranquillity of Ireland, and the
 interests of the empire at large, in giving the pre-
 ference

ference to the former: but that it was, in a great measure, because his objections to both were radical and insuperable, that he was compelled to give his cordial and entire support to the measure of a legislative Union.

He said, it was a satisfaction to him to know that the opinion which he entertained on this subject was sanctioned by great and respectable authorities. It could not be unimportant to the weight and credit of such a measure, to state that it had been countenanced by distinguished and enlightened men in the last century; that it had the approbation of Sir Matthew Decker, Sir William Petty, and Sir Josiah Child; that Molineux, the friend of Locke, who had incurred, as the Journals could testify, the displeasure of that House, for his bold assertion of the independent authority of the Parliament of his native country, anxiously wished for its adoption. After having referred in his publication on this subject, to many ancient documents, for the purpose of proving that at an early period of our history, delegates from Ireland had been sent to the Parliament of Great Britain, Mr. Molineux adds—"If from these records it be concluded that the Parliament of England may bind Ireland, it must also be allowed that the people of Ireland ought to have their representatives in the Parliament of England; and this I believe we should be willing enough to embrace, but it is an happiness we can hardly hope for."

It was also material to state, that in the second year of the reign of Queen Anne, when, as had been said, it had become difficult for the Protestants, to keep their ground in Ireland, a Committee of the House of

of Lords of that kingdom was appointed to take into consideration the state of the nation : and the Committee reported, " That upon due consideration of
 " the present constitution of this kingdom, such an
 " humble representation be made to the Queen of
 " the state and condition thereof, as may best incline
 " her Majesty, by such proper means as to her
 " Majesty shall seem fit, to promote such an Union
 " with England as may best qualify the states of this
 " kingdom to be represented there." The proposition was not listened to by the Queen's Ministers, and, as has been stated by Lord Clare, " it was not
 " till this attempt to unite the Parliaments of both
 " countries had proved abortive, that the great code
 " of the Popery laws of Ireland was enacted : a code," he admitted; " of great severity, but evidently
 " forced upon the Parliament by necessity."

To these authorities, and many others might be cited in support of them; he had the utmost satisfaction in adding those of Lord Clare, Lord Carleton, Lord Kilwarden, and particularly of Lord Yelverton, who had been called the " Father of the Independence
 " of the Irish Parliament," but whose sentiments at this time were by no means inconsistent with his conduct in 1782 ; as it was only by the establishment of the independence of the Parliament of Ireland, that a legislative Union could be the result of compact between the two countries. Without that measure it must have been an act of power on the part of Great Britain.

To the opinions of these great and enlightened men, who have proved themselves to be the true friends of Great Britain and Ireland, by their constant
 C endeavours

endeavours to encourage and promote a close and intimate connection between the two countries, he desired to add those entertained by Dr. McNevin and others, of that, which (with reference to their own views and projects) they justly denominated *a fatal measure*. It would be recollected, that these persons have declared, that, on their parts, Catholic Emancipation was a mere pretence, and that separation was the real and invariable object of all their hopes and all their efforts. On the 9th of April 1795, *the Committee of Nine*, of which Dr. McNevin, Lewins, Ryan, and others of the same description, were members, assembled at the Chapel in Francis-street, Dublin, and came to the following, amongst other resolutions:

“ Resolved unanimously, That we are sincerely and
 “ unalterably attached to the rights, liberties, and in-
 “ dependence of our native country, and we pledge
 “ ourselves, collectively and individually, to resist,
 “ even our own emancipation, if proposed to be con-
 “ ceded on the ignominious terms of acquiescence in
 “ the fatal measure of an Union with the sister kingdom.
 “ Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this
 “ meeting be respectfully presented to our agent,
 “ Theobald Wolfe Tone, Esq. for the readiness with
 “ which he accompanied our deputies to England,
 “ and the many other important services he has ren-
 “ dered to the Catholic body, in pursuit of emanci-
 “ pation—services, which no gratitude can over-
 “ rate, and no remuneration can overpay.”

It was not, however, upon authority only, much as he was inclined to respect it, nor upon the repugnance of United Irishmen to this measure, that he was disposed to support and recommend it. He thought

thought that it was calculated to avert much probable evil from both countries, and to produce positive and substantial advantages to both.

One of the leading considerations in its favour was, that it would in future preclude the inconvenience and danger, of which recent experience warrants the apprehension, arising from the discordant determinations of separate and independent Legislatures. He reminded the Committee of the proceedings of the Irish Parliament, upon the subject of the Commercial Propositions in 1785, and the question of the appointment of a Regent, which occurred in 1788. In the former, the sensitive jealousy of the Parliament of Ireland deprived that country of the obvious and undisputed advantages which were held out to it, by a free access to the home market of Great Britain; in the latter, it would be recollected that the diversity of opinion, which occurred in the two Parliaments, led not only to a difference as to the extent of the power and authority, but as to the identity of the person, by whom, during the illness of his Majesty, the functions of executive government were to be exercised. The same illustrious Personage was indeed nominated by both, but by one as a matter of choice; in virtue of a supposed right by the other; in one with more limited powers; in the other with powers as unlimited as those of the Monarch himself. It was therefore obvious that the discordant principles, which operated at that juncture, and which actually occasioned the delegation of different degrees of authority, might also have led to the nomination of different individuals: and this at the hazard of the tranquillity and safety of the empire, and in direct violation

of the spirit of the unrepealed statute of Henry VIII, which enacts that "the kingdom of Ireland is inseparably annexed to, and dependent upon, the Crown of Great Britain, and that whoever is King of England is thereby *ipso facto* King of Ireland."

Upon every thinking mind a deep impression was made by these transactions; and a very respectable Gentleman, who now holds a high office in Ireland, is reported to have said, in a debate at that period, "If these sentiments are to prevail, what shall prevent us to-morrow from adopting a different Mutiny-bill, or disclaiming an uniformity in religion? The unity of the executive magistrate has been well called the solitary bond of union; but can it exist for a moment, if a possibility remains of the two Legislatures being discordant on this subject? Unless one is suffered to take the lead, the alternative is obvious: with two Legislatures so liable to pull different ways, no authority can govern."

His Honourable Friend, who preceded him, appeared, however, to be under little apprehension upon the subject of a possible difference of sentiments and conduct, in the two Legislatures. He thought that as the King of Great Britain was the supreme executive magistrate, and therefore vested with the same prerogatives in both countries, it was not to be supposed that those embarrassments and dangers would arise, which might be occasioned by a declared difference of opinion on the subject of treaties, or on the great questions of peace or war. The Speaker said, he knew and respected the prerogatives of the Crown, but he likewise knew and respected the privileges of the people. Of these the power of the purse

purse was the most important; it was the great instrument of support and controul; the check upon the abuse of power on the part of the advisers of the Crown, and the safeguard and guardian of the interest and liberties of the people. It would not be contended that this great privilege was to be borne down by prerogative; and if not, it might, at a period of public emergency, be differently exercised in both countries. In one, supplies might be liberally granted; in the other, absolutely withheld; and the co-operation of the two great branches of the empire could never be ensured, even on occasions in which its security and independence were deeply and essentially involved. The Speaker, however, declared, that his hopes went farther; he thought, that if the present measure was carried into effect, it would not only preclude such a discordance as he had described, but that it would lead to a coincidence of views and sentiments in the great body of the people of both kingdoms; that they would all look the same way; and that their feelings and opinions would invariably recognise the same interests, the same allies, and the same enemies.

He must however declare, that no consideration so forcibly impelled him to wish for the adoption of this measure, as his conviction of the beneficial consequences with which it would be attended to the internal situation of Ireland: his hope and belief were, that it would lead to the removal of a principal ground of animosity, by precluding the species of contest, which had hitherto subsisted for obtaining political authority and power.—Amongst the lower orders of society, he was convinced that its salutary effects would be found

found in that change of manners, the result of habitual industry, which would necessarily be produced by the transfer of a part of the capital of Great Britain to that country. Could it be supposed, he would ask, that persons of opulence would be so much inclined to embark any part of their property from hence in the trade and commerce of Ireland, if the Parliament of that country were still to remain distinct from, instead of being incorporated with that of Great Britain? Of the consequences which must be produced by such an application of part of the wealth of this country, no doubt could be entertained: it would operate on every class of the community, and diffuse itself throughout every part of that kingdom: and notwithstanding what had been said of the aggravation that would be occasioned by a legislative Union to the evil arising from the non-residence of the opulent proprietors of land in that country, he was convinced, that whatever had a tendency to give security to property and improvement to manners would prove the fallacy of such a supposition; and that even those wastes and fastnesses, which now afford retreat to the marauder, the assassin, and the rebel, would be the scenes of cheerful labour and protected industry, of mutual confidence and social intercourse, under the superintendence and guardianship of well administered and beneficent laws.

If had been said, that amongst the consequences of such a measure, it could not be contended that it would be possible to mention any immediate advantage to the Roman Catholics of Ireland: from this assertion, however, he must beg leave to dissent. The elective franchise itself, bestowed by the Parliament

liament of Ireland in 1793, could hardly be considered as a boon to the Roman Catholics, whom it was hoped and intended to gratify: the right, with the limitation annexed to it, could not be exercised in most instances, without some degree of violence to their opinions and their feelings: it could only be made use of for the purpose of contributing to form a House of Commons, the whole body of which they too generally conceived to be adverse to their interests, and those of the individuals, to whom, from a coincidence in religious opinions and from other causes, they had been accustomed to look up with the utmost respect: Whereas the same franchise, if employed in contributing to form the representation in an united Parliament, might be accompanied with the satisfactory reflection, that the individual in whose behalf it was exercised, would be mixed with those, a majority of whom were uninfluenced by the prejudices which they have imputed, whether on sufficient ground or otherwise is not now to be considered, to the Parliament and to the great body of the Protestants in Ireland.

With respect to the expediency of extending to the Roman Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland, in the event of such a measure as was now in contemplation, a more ample participation of the rights of Protestant subjects, he would not now offer an opinion; he would however quote the sentiments of a person (Dr. Duigenan) whose good sense he admired, and who would not be accused of a strong bias towards the Roman Catholics of Ireland: "It has been
 " the opinion of very great and able statesmen, that
 " an union with England, on just and equitable
 " terms,

" terms, would be very advantageous to Ireland, would
 " contribute greatly to increase her trade and her
 " opulence, and conduce to the strength of the em-
 " pire at large: and in any event, it could not be
 " more prejudicial to the Romanists of Ireland, than
 " to any other class of his Majesty's subjects here,
 " but much less (if it could be at all prejudicial,
 " which I cannot admit), in as much, if we were
 " one people with the British nation, the prepon-
 " derance of the Protestant body of the whole em-
 " pire would be so great, that all rivalry and jea-
 " lousies between Protestants and Romanists would
 " cease or ever, and it would not be necessary, for
 " the safety of the empire at large, to curb Romanists
 " by any exclusive law whatsoever."

On the supposed surrender of the rights of the
 Parliament of Ireland, and the sacrifice of its inde-
 pendency, he was not disposed to dwell; the futility
 of the arguments on which those objections were
 founded, was, in his opinion at least, fully developed
 on a former occasion: he would only say, that if an
 uniform coincidence should take place between the
 two Legislatures, the independency of one or the
 other would be liable to be called in question; and
 that without such a coincidence the interests of the
 empire, and eventually the connexion between the
 two countries, might possibly be endangered.

The Speaker said, he was not inclined to take up
 the time of the Committee by a reference to the
 particulars of the Union with Scotland, to the con-
 sequences which followed that measure, or to the
 arguments which they suggested on the present oc-
 casion. These topics had been already discussed, in
 a manner

a manner which could not fail to make a forcible impression on the House. He would only remark, that the animosity between the two nations, immediately previous to the Union, was such, as to have led them to the verge of hostilities; and that the grounds of distrust, and complaint, were thereby entirely done away. He also observed, that there were circumstances tending to facilitate an intimate connexion between this country and Ireland, and to incorporate the people of those kingdoms, which did not belong to the relation in which England and Scotland stood to each other. It would be recollected, amongst other illustrations of this observation, that here, and in Ireland, there was the same code of civil and criminal law; the same forms for the administration of justice; and for the purposes of legislation, the same succession to the crown; and the same established religion.

Having stated a few of the many considerations which, in his opinion, recommended this measure, he thought it incumbent upon him to notice some of the objections that had been made to it. Of these there were two, either of which, if valid, was fundamental and insuperable. The first was to the competency of the Parliament of Ireland to accede to this measure: the second relied on the final adjustment, as it had been termed, of the year 1782. The one called in question the nature and extent of the authority of the Parliament of Ireland; the other solemnly appealed to the good faith of the Parliament of Great Britain. In viewing the question of competency, he said, it appeared to him that new doctrines of the present day were on the one side,

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and

and the sound principles, the theory and the practice of the British constitution, on the other. The highest legal authorities affirmed the extent and the supremacy of the power of Parliament. It was sufficient to refer to the names of Sir Edward Coke, Sir Matthew Hale, Sir William Blackstone, and many others, who, to say the least, have never been charged with a bias against the constitution and liberties of their country.

That the functions of the Legislature should be exercised on all occasions, and particularly on one so solemn and important as the present, with the utmost circumspection, would be readily and universally allowed. It must also be admitted, that Parliament possesses the power, and the right, when called for by the obligation of providing for the public security and welfare, to new-model the constitution, and to alter the succession to the Crown, and the established religion of these kingdoms; and he would then ask those to whose objections he was referring, where, if not in Parliament, the means of carrying into effect such an arrangement as that which is now in contemplation, however necessary, and however approved, could possibly be supposed to reside? Not in the constituent body, for it would hardly be said that they had delegated a trust to their representatives, with a reservation in particular cases: not in the people at large, for such a supposition would imply the dissolution of the Government; as it is an established truth, that, whilst the constitution exists, the only legitimate sanction of public opinion, and its only efficient authority, must be derived from the proceedings of Parliament. “This is the
“place,”

“ place,” Sir William Blackstone observes, “ where
 “ that transcendent and absolute power, which must
 “ in all governments reside somewhere, is entrusted
 “ by the constitution of these kingdoms.”

The attempts to preclude the discussion of the present subject, by the denomination of a Final Adjustment, which had been bestowed on the proceedings of the year 1782, struck him with more astonishment than even those which he had read and heard against the sufficiency of Parliament itself. If any importance were to be attached to those words, he should have expected to find them solemnly recorded in acts of the respective Legislatures, as the basis of the new relation which then took place between the two countries: what, however, was the fact? They are mentioned in a message from the King, and noticed in the addresses of the British Parliament, and of the House of Lords in Ireland; but in the address of the House of Commons of that country, these words are not to be found.

He observed, that as it had been the practice (and a judicious one it was, where there is a general concurrence of opinion), that the address should accord with the speech or the message from his Majesty, the omission was remarkable. All, however, that had been said upon this part of the subject, appeared to him to be a dispute about words; for he was ready to acknowledge, that the British Parliament would justly incur the imputation of a gross breach of faith, if they were to aim, either directly or indirectly, at the resumption of the power and supremacy which were then solemnly renounced: that the adjustment, as far as the independency of the Irish Parliament

was concerned, was really and absolutely final and conclusive; but if the argument, which was meant to be founded on these words, could be expected to avail, it must not only pass over the measure which took place in the subsequent year, and the resolution which immediately succeeded the act for the repeal of the 6th of Geo. I. but it must contend that the true import of those words was so binding and peremptory, as to bar the possibility of adopting any ulterior arrangement of the nature of that to which they might be supposed to apply, however called for by the obvious interests, and the wishes of the inhabitants of both countries. Such a proposition could not be maintained, and if not, the argument with which it was necessarily connected, must, in his opinion, fall to the ground.

The Speaker said that some objections had been urged, the force of which he would by no means deny. He was thoroughly convinced that the House of Commons, as at present constituted, was a true and faithful representative of the people of Great Britain; that their opinions and their wishes (he did not mean the fluctuating and fleeting impressions of the day, but those which were the result of information and reflection) had their due influence, and were there fully and accurately expressed. He could not, therefore, contemplate without anxiety, the possible effects of such an alteration as the measure in question would produce.

He was not, however, inclined to oppose a conjectural and contingent evil to that which was positive and immediate; or if he did, he must compare one, as cautiously as he could, with the other, and strike
the

the balance. His apprehensions on this subject would be greater, were it not for the experience which has been afforded by the Union with Scotland: but the pressing evils, which it was the duty of the House, if possible, to avert, were uppermost in his mind; and he was convinced that every other remedy which had been suggested was fraught with consequences infinitely more injurious than any of those which even this circumstance, objectionable as he allowed it to be, was capable of producing.

Of the danger to the commercial interests of this country, which had been adverted to, but which had not been much insisted upon, he said he entertained no serious apprehension. It was not true that Great Britain would necessarily lose what Ireland would gain. He knew besides the liberality, and the good sense of the merchants and manufacturers of this country: if Ireland should cease to be a separate kingdom, they would not entertain a wish to withhold from her inhabitants a fair and equal participation of the advantages which were enjoyed by themselves; and they were fully aware that whatever contributed to promote industry and to produce tranquillity, in Ireland, had a tendency to give additional security and stability to the trading interests of Great Britain.

It had been asked, why, if this measure was brought forward with such obvious advantages, the adoption of it had not been sooner recommended? To which it had been justly and forcibly answered, that it should not be wondered at, if those, who are convinced that a close connexion between the two countries is essential to the welfare of both, should be particularly solicitous to strengthen and confirm it, when

when the dissolution of that connexion is the avowed object of the intestine traitors in Ireland, and of the common enemy of the two kingdoms.

He was, however, concerned to think, and to acknowledge, that precautionary wisdom had very little influence on the conduct of individuals, or of nations; an evil must in general have been painfully experienced before measures are taken to remove it, or to guard against its return: the abuses of power led to that establishment of our rights, and that security to our liberties, which took place at the Revolution. The weight of the public debt was becoming, at least in the opinion of many, intolerable to the subjects of this country, before efficacious measures were adopted for its diminution; and it was not until public credit was seriously reduced, and the objections to the plan of raising the supplies of the year, by the ordinary practice of loans, became almost insuperable, that the system of the present session of Parliament was adopted; which, however burdensome, was a subject of general approbation, and a source of pride, of satisfaction, and of confidence to a great majority of the people.

To this want of promptitude to provide against remote and contingent evils, one exception indeed presented itself to his recollection: it was the measure adopted by the Parliament in 1791, which provided, that in case of future loans a further sum should be borrowed, to be applied as a sinking fund, for the purpose of gradually redeeming the addition thereby occasioned to the funded debt. Too much could not be said in commendation of the

the provident wisdom and justice of that measure, which is constantly employed in diminishing the pressure upon public credit, which arises from an increasing accumulation of the debt contracted since the commencement of the war; and in effecting an entire relief from its burdens perhaps to ourselves, but certainly, and at no distant period, to our descendants.

Some Gentlemen had entertained an opinion which, he acknowledged, was entitled to serious attention and consideration; that, as the proposed measure had been discountenanced by the House of Commons in Ireland, to persist in the discussion of it here, would be to add to the irritation which unhappily prevails in that country. Such an effect he should sincerely lament, and should be sorry to have any share in producing. There were other consequences, however, which it was of the utmost importance to avert. If the Parliament of this country were to abstain from declaring the conditions upon which it would be disposed to incorporate itself with the Parliament of Ireland, it was impossible not to be aware of the opportunity and scope which would be afforded for misconception, suspicion, and misrepresentation.

He trusted that we should adopt such resolutions as would rather tend to appease, than to inflame; such as would be a pledge of our liberality, and our justice: that we should manifest the earnestness and sincerity of our wishes to communicate to Ireland a full participation of all the advantages we enjoy; that we should prove ourselves desirous of considering the inhabitants of the two countries as one

one people, connected together by the closest ties under the same Constitution, the same Parliament, and the same King.

He had understood that, if the Resolutions which had been opened should be agreed to, it would be proposed that they should be carried to the foot of the Throne, accompanied by an Address to his Majesty. In that Address he hoped, and was persuaded, that no sentiments or expressions would be introduced which jealousy might misinterpret, or malice pervert: that there would be no indication of a wish on our part to press the consideration of the question upon the Legislature of Ireland; and that no impulse would be given to it, but what it might derive from the free and unbiassed opinions, and dispassionate judgment of the Parliament and People of that kingdom.

The subject, he was convinced, would make its way. To Ireland he was satisfied that greater advantages were now held out, than had ever been afforded by any single measure to any country; that it would greatly augment the resources, and place upon a rock that would be impregnable, as far as that term could be applied to any human establishment, the strength and security of the British empire. He would, however, acknowledge, that his views and hopes extended still farther, as he was thoroughly persuaded, that whatever had a tendency to consolidate and maintain the power and the independence of these kingdoms, was of the deepest importance to the best and most valuable interests of mankind.—From these considerations he gave the Resolution his most cordial support.

THE END.



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THE
SUBSTANCE
OF THE
S P E E C H
OF
ROBERT PEEL, ESQUIRE, | K
IN THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS,

On THURSDAY, the 14th of February, 1799,

ON THE
QUESTION for receiving the Report of the Committee on
the RESOLUTIONS respecting an
INCORPORATE UNION WITH IRELAND.

WITH A

CORRECT COPY of the RESOLUTIONS, as they
were finally amended by the House of Commons.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY JOHN EXSHAW, 98, GRAFTON-STREET

1799.

[Price a British Six-pence.]



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THE
SUBSTANCE
OF THE
SPEECH, &c.

MR. PEEL prefaced his Speech, by saying, That a regard for consistency made him anxious to trespass a few minutes on the patience of the House.

Mr. Speaker,

SIR,

In the year 1785, during the discussion of the Irish arrangements, as they were called, I was a petitioner at your bar against
these

those arrangements with Ireland; and I am warranted in saying, that I carried with me the sentiments of a great proportion of the trading interest of England. The object of those propositions was to open a freer intercourse betwixt two independent kingdoms; the one possessing great foreign dominions, and an universal commerce; the other possessing no foreign dominions, and very little trade; and, consequently, enjoying separate interests, as they always must, while they have separate legislatures; because they may become separate, in fact. It was apparent, then, that those arrangements, however well intended, would have been prejudicial to the manufactures of Great Britain. The support I have given the present measure, does not arise from a change of sentiments, but of circumstances. This plan embraces great advantages, both political and commercial, which, by uniting two countries

countries into one country, are calculated to add strength and security to the Empire; and is so essentially necessary at this time, when a daring attempt has been made, both by intrigue, and force, to separate the countries, that inferior considerations ought not to weigh against a plan, which bids fair to frustrate such attempts, and to consolidate both the interest, and affections of the sister kingdoms. By an union we shall become one people; and though the benefits, in a commercial point of view, will be chiefly enjoyed by Ireland; yet, if an opinion may be formed of the sentiments of the trading body of this nation, from their patriotic and respectful silence, a disposition is manifested to reach out a friendly arm to their distressed brethren, to raise them from their present unhappy state to a condition of ease and comfort, similar to

our

our own. This conduct does the British merchants and manufacturers so much honour, that I feel particular pleasure in classing myself amongst that highly valuable and respectable body of men.

THOUGH a friend to the principle of the measure, I think it my duty to draw the attention of the house to the sixth * resolution. It must be the intention of every one to place both countries on an equal footing; and though nothing can be apprehended unfavourable to this country, during the present low circumstances of Ireland, it may have an operation, at a future time, highly prejudicial to our domestic industry. Each country is to provide for its own public debt; and that of Great Britain being infinitely larger than the debt of Ire-

* See the Resolutions at the end.

land,

land, heavy taxes are necessarily imposed on almost every article of consumption, which has so strong a tendency to enhance the price of labour, that goods manufactured under such a pressure, cannot be rendered on equally low terms with the produce of labour in places where similar burdens do not exist. Unless this objection be removed, the measure cannot be expected to have the concurrence of Great Britain. I feel it the more necessary to urge this point, having perceived a want of that liberality in the Irish government, which characterizes our own. The commercial intercourse now subsisting betwixt the two countries, has lost every feature of reciprocity; British manufactures being heavily taxed on their admission into Ireland, whilst the goods of that kingdom meet with every encouragement here. Whatever may be the conduct of Ireland respecting

respecting the propositions of an union, I trust the firmness of administration will be such, as to refuse all concession to menace and intrigue; and that the aid which may be deemed necessary to extend in future to that nation, will be received as the genuine offspring of affection: I always will oppose the giving much for nothing, when demanded as a matter of right.

HAVING said thus much as a commercial man, I beg the further indulgence of the house as a member of parliament; though it may be deemed presumption in me to speak on a subject which has engaged the first abilities in this house, and after a display of talents on both sides, which never were exceeded. I see, with satisfaction, distinguished members of opposition in their places; because I think that their attendance on great constitutional questions,

questions, induces discussions highly useful and gratifying to the nation. I cannot, however, compliment them on the grounds they have taken in the present debate. The interests of Great Britain are so deeply involved in this question, that I did expect the nature, and extent, of the sacrifices to be made on our part would have been strongly laid down, and formed such a contrast to the imperial advantages so forcibly stated by the friends of administration, as to have enabled the house to come to a matured decision on the subject. Not having been so assisted, my first impressions are unaltered; and there I shall give the measure my continued support. The independence of the Irish legislature having been unequivocally acknowledged by ministers, as it had been by Parliament, and strenuously insisted on by the other side of the house, I am the more surprised to find,

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that

that the measure of union has been debated by the latter on Irish interest only, as if the question were finally to be disposed of here, without being argued elsewhere.

THERE are scarcely two opinions in this house, respecting the utility of an union at a proper time, and on fair and equitable terms; though several gentlemen have expressed their marked disapprobation of the measure at this period. Considering the state of Ireland, with a weak government, a disunited people, and with the standard of rebellion erected in many parts of it, this plan is calculated to remove such alarming disorders; and the sooner the remedy is applied the better.

THE manner of bringing forward the resolutions is deemed objectionable. Several gentlemen are of opinion, that they ought
first

first to have been submitted to the Irish parliament, before they had experienced a discussion here. If the union involved in it sacrifices to be made exclusively on the part of Ireland, the complaint would have been just: the contrary, however, being the case, and the concessions confined to Great Britain, such a proceeding would have been highly disrespectful and injurious to this country.

THE feelings of pride and national consequence have been awakened in Ireland; they cannot reconcile themselves to the loss of their separate state, and distinct legislature: these are valuable privileges, boasted to have been acquired by their own exertion and patriotism, aided by the liberality of the British parliament. But let me ask, Has not Great Britain likewise valuable privileges, purchased with the blood

blood of our ancestors? A distinct kingdom, and an independent legislature? A people united, and removed from every danger, either foreign or domestic?—In forming, therefore, an imperial legislature, Ireland loses no rights which are not likewise surrendered by Great Britain: the distinct kingdoms will be mixed into one compact body, and thereby derive additional strength and security: Ireland will gain by the proposed Union, an *imperial* legislature, instead of a *local* legislature.

THE small proportion of Irish members forming a part of the imperial parliament is considered by many as a surrender of their independence. That an opinion so unfounded should be entertained by a stranger to the character and constitution of the British parliament does not excite much astonishment; but that it should meet with the smallest countenance from those

those who have uniformly declared, that a change in the Irish representation must be for the better, is, I own, a little extraordinary. Every member of this house is a representative of Great Britain, and does not consider his duties confined to the place for which he was chosen. Yorkshire and Lancashire are the most extensive and flourishing counties in England, though individually they are very inadequately represented. When, therefore the two countries are incorporated, it will be both the duty, and inclination of every member composing the imperial parliament, to promote the interest of Ireland equally with that of every other part of the united kingdom. Instead, therefore, of Ireland losing two-thirds of her members, she will increase the number from three hundred to six hundred and fifty-eight; and I shall not be contradicted in saying, if an union should take place, it will

will be one of their first duties to administer relief, and ameliorate the condition of the people of Ireland, to communicate to them British comforts, and make them as flourishing and happy, as the people of Great Britain are, from enjoying the benefits of a more liberal system.

THE remarks of the honourable member who spoke first (Mr. Hobhouse) respecting an increase of Absentees, merits particular notice. I am ready to admit, to the fullest extent, the injury which has already resulted to the sister kingdom from this circumstance. In a country, however, governed by equal laws and a free constitution; I see no practicable means of compelling a residence, or removing the existing evil, under the present order of things. The proposed union will have an effect the very reverse of that on which the honourable
Gentleman

Gentleman founds his opposition. Scotland, and the parts of England most remote from London, sustain no injury on account of people of rank and property spending a great proportion of their time and income in the Capital. Manufactures, and other considerable objects of labour, generally flourish most at a distance from the seat of luxury, and the gay pursuits of genteel life. The want of access to the money circulating in England keeps Ireland comparatively poor and unindustrious. When the British markets are, therefore, laid open, property sent from that kingdom will be returned through the medium of industry, by which an equilibrium will be restored.

THE mind, unaccustomed to embrace objects of immense magnitude, will be assisted by a commercial intercourse. Suppose two houses in business, one of which is

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of the first respectability, with an immense capital, and extensive dealings in every part of the globe; the other in a comparatively low situation, with but little property, limited credit, and confined connections, and a proposal is made by the former, to take the latter into partnership on equal terms; such an offer never having been refused, we may easily suppose is eagerly accepted: in this case, each party will lose his distinct firm, and the two houses become one. It is unnecessary to ask here, on which side the advantage lies, though both may be benefited.

THE clamours raised against the Union by interested men in Ireland, may for a time mislead the judgment of many people; the delusion however cannot be of long continuance; and a proposition, the most liberal on the part of Great Britain, and on the

the acceptance of which the salvation of Ireland depends, must be received with sentiments of satisfaction, and gratitude, in the end, when reason shall take the place of passion; when policy shall prevail over prejudice; and wisdom shall govern, where enthusiasm misleads.

THE RESOLUTIONS,

As they were finally amended and sent by the Commons
to the Lords.

I. THAT in order to promote and secure the essential Interests of Great Britain and Ireland, and to consolidate the Strength, Power, and Resources of the British Empire, It will be adviseable to concur in such Measures as may best tend to unite the Two Kingdoms of Great Britain

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and Ireland into One Kingdom, in such Manner, and on such Terms and Conditions, as may be established by Acts of the respective Parliaments of His Majesty's said Kingdoms.

II. That it would be fit to propose; as the First Article, to serve as a Basis of the said Union, That the said Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland shall, upon a Day to be agreed upon, be united into One Kingdom, by the Name of "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland."

III. That for the same Purpose it would be fit to propose, That the Succession to the Monarchy and the Imperial Crown of the said United Kingdom shall continue limited and settled in the same Manner as the Imperial Crown of the said Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland now stands limited and settled, according to the existing Laws, and to the Terms of the Union between England and Scotland.

IV. That for the same Purpose it would be fit to propose, That the said United Kingdom be represented in One and the same Parliament, to be stiled "The Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland;" and that such a Number of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and such a Number of Members in the House of Commons, as
shall

shall be hereafter agreed upon by Acts of the respective Parliaments as aforesaid, shall sit and vote in the said Parliament on the Part of Ireland, as shall be summoned, chosen, and returned in such Manner as shall be fixed by an Act of Parliament of Ireland previous to the said Union; and that every Member hereafter to sit and vote in the said Parliament of the United Kingdom, shall, until the said Parliament shall otherwise provide, take and subscribe the same Oaths, and make the same Declarations, as are by Law required to be taken, subscribed, and made by the Members of the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland.

V. That for the same Purpose it would be fit to propose, That the Churches of that Part of Great Britain, called England, and of that Part of Great Britain, called Scotland, and of Ireland, and the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government thereof, shall be preserved as now by Law established:

VI. That for the same Purpose it would be fit to propose, That His Majesty's Subjects in Ireland shall at all times hereafter be entitled to the same Privileges, and be on the same Footing, in respect of Trade and Navigation, in all Ports and Places belonging to Great Britain, and in
all

all Cases with respect to which Treaties shall be made by His Majesty, His Heirs or Successors, with any Foreign Power, as His Majesty's Subjects in Great Britain :—That no Duty shall be imposed on the Import or Export between Great Britain and Ireland of any Articles now Duty free ; and that on other Articles there shall be established, for a Time to be limited, such a moderate Rate of equal Duties as shall, previous to the Union, be agreed upon and approved by the respective Parliaments ; subject, after the Expiration of such limited Time, to be diminished equally with respect to both Kingdoms, but in no Case to be increased :—That all Articles which may at any Time hereafter be imported into Great Britain from Foreign Parts, shall be importable through either Kingdom into the other, subject to the like Duties and Regulations as if the same were imported directly from Foreign Parts :—That where any Articles, the Growth, Produce, or Manufacture of either Kingdom, are subject to any internal Duty in one Kingdom, such countervailing Duties (over and above any Duties on Import to be fixed as aforesaid shall be imposed as shall be necessary to prevent any Inequality in that Respect :—And that all other Matters of Trade and Commerce, other than the foregoing, and than such others as may, before the Union, be specially agreed upon for the due Encouragement of the Agriculture and Manufactures of the respective Kingdoms, shall remain

to be regulated from Time to Time by the United Parliament.

VII. That for the same Purpose it would be fit to propose, That the Charge arising from the Payment of the Interest or Sinking Fund for the Reduction of the Principal, of the Debt incurred in either Kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively :—That, for a Number of Years to be limited, the future Expences of the United Kingdom, in Peace or War, shall be defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland jointly, according to such Proportions as shall be established by the respective Parliaments previous to the Union ; and that, after the Expiration of the Time to be so limited, the Mode of jointly defraying such Expences shall be regulated, according to such Rules and Principles as shall be in like Manner agreed upon previous to the Union, for the Purpose of establishing, gradually, an uniform System of Taxation through every Part of the Kingdom.

VIII. That for the same Purpose it would be fit to propose, That all Laws in force at the Time of the Union, and all the Courts of Civil or Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction within the respective Kingdoms, shall remain as now by
law

Law established within the same; subject only to such Alterations or Regulations from Time to Time as Circumstances may appear, to the Parliament of the United Kingdom, to require.



FINIS.

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To which are added,

The SPEECHES of the RIGHT HON. JOHN FOSTER, on the 12th and 15th of August, on the Bill for effectuating the INTERCOURSE and COMMERCE between GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND, on permanent and equitable Principles, for the mutual Benefit of both Kingdoms. Price 1s. 7hd.

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SUBSTANCE

OF

Lord Auckland's Speech,

&c. &c.

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SUBSTANCE

SPEECH

WILLIAM PITT

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS



ADDRESS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

RESOLUTIONS

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1790

OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1790

OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1790

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SUBSTANCE
OF THE
SPEECH
OF
LORD AUCKLAND,
IN THE HOUSE OF PEERS,
APRIL 11, 1799,
ON THE PROPOSED
ADDRESS TO HIS MAJESTY,
RESPECTING THE
RESOLUTIONS
ADOPTED BY
THE TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,
AS THE
BASIS OF AN UNION
BETWEEN
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR J. MILLIKEN, No. 32, GRAFTON-STREET.

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S P E E C H, &c.

LORD GRENVILLE having moved the following Address to His Majesty, viz.

“ We, your Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects,
“ the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament
“ assembled, humbly beg leave to assure your Majesty,
“ that We have proceeded with the utmost attention to
“ the consideration of the important objects recom-
“ mended to Us in your Majesty’s Message, respecting the
“ connection between this Country and Ireland.

“ We entertain a firm persuasion that a complete and
“ entire Union between Great Britain and Ireland,
“ founded on equal and liberal principles, on the
“ similarity of Laws, Constitution, and Government,
“ and on a sense of mutual interests and affections,
“ by promoting the security, wealth, and commerce,

“ of the respective Kingdoms, and by allaying the dis-
 “ tractions which have unhappily prevailed in Ireland, must
 “ afford fresh means of opposing at all times an effectual
 “ resistance to the destructive projects of our foreign and
 “ domestic enemies, and must tend to confirm and aug-
 “ ment the stability, power, and resources of the Empire.

“ Impressed with these considerations, We feel it our
 “ duty humbly to lay before your Majesty such Propositi-
 “ ons as appear to Us best calculated to form the basis of
 “ such a settlement, leaving it to your Majesty's wisdom, at
 “ such time and in such manner as your Majesty, in your
 “ parental solicitude for the happiness of your People, shall
 “ judge fit, to communicate these propositions to your par-
 “ liament of Ireland, with whom we shall be at all times
 “ ready to concur in all such measures as may be found
 “ most conducive to the accomplishment of this great and
 “ salutary work. And We trust that, after full and ma-
 “ ture consideration, such a settlement may be framed and
 “ established by the deliberative consent of the Parlia-
 “ ments of both Kingdoms, as may be conformable to the
 “ sentiments, wishes, and real interests of your Majesty's
 “ faithful subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, and may
 “ unite them inseparably in the full enjoyment of the bles-
 “ sings of our free and invaluable Constitution, in the sup-
 “ port of the honour and dignity of your Majesty's Crown,
 “ and in the preservation and advancement of the welfare
 “ and prosperity of the whole British Empire ;”

LORD AUCKLAND rose and spoke as follows :

MY LORDS,

I rise with earnestness, and with peculiar satisfaction, to give my support to an Address to the revered Sovereign of the two Kingdoms, for the purpose of communicating our resolutions to the Lords and Commons of Ireland.

This measure will hold out to the Irish Nation a most solemn pledge of the liberality, affection, and wisdom, of the British Parliament; and will explicitly record the motives and principles by which we are guided in our endeavour to consolidate the Legislatures and unite the interests of Great Britain and of Ireland.

I feel no regret, my Lords, that I have waited in silence to the close of our proceeding. I willingly reposed myself on the superior abilities of others, for the discussion and explanation of the leading and general topics. It may still, however, be possible to throw new lights upon a question which involves the future government and well-being of the greatest empire now existing. Such a subject is inexhaustible.

ible. The portion of it which I now propose to offer to your attention, is dry and of much detail. I undertake it only from a sense of duty; and it is an encouragement to me to think that our debates are contributing to the removal of many ill-founded notions and misrepresentations, which were prevalent in the Sister Kingdom.

Few indeed are those who now deny the necessity of some great change being made in the system of Irish Government; and I do not believe that any Noble Lord will maintain, as an unqualified proposition, that the Union of the two Kingdoms, accomplished on grounds satisfactory to each, would not promote the tranquillity, civilization, and prosperity of Ireland, and eventually the strength and security of Great Britain, and of the British Empire.

I assume accordingly, that an Union is desirable, if it can be reconciled to the opinions and goodwill of both the contracting parties.

The time was, my Lords, when the objections would have originated in this Kingdom;

and we cannot wonder that our ancestors seemed * to wish to avoid a measure, the immediate and most obvious benefits of which were always in favour of Ireland. It is now, however, well understood, that national wealth may be shared and extended, without lessening the prosperity of the country which gives the participation; and the good sense and enlightened liberality of our countrymen would at present induce them to rely cheerfully and confidently on their Parliament, both for the expediency of an Union and for the adjustment of the conditions.

But the consent and co-operation of Ireland are still wanting. Ireland, my Lords, must form her own decision; she must decide for herself, through the medium of the deliberate wisdom of her Parliament.

I am aware, and I admit, that the proposition, at its first opening, has not had the apparent assent of the Irish House of Commons. A small majority of the members who were pre-

* See the Appendix, No. 1.

sent declined the consideration of the measure, and some individuals refused even to know what it was. I will not attribute such a conduct to interested views, to false alarms, to fabricated clamour, to unthinking precipitancy, or to a false punctilio and a mistaken sense of national pride. I wish to avoid, and I disclaim, every sentiment and every expression that may be harsh or invidious : but I must be permitted to say, and I say it with satisfaction, that I know enough of the theatre of action, and of the principal actors upon that theatre, to do them the justice to believe, that their resistance will give way to the commanding voice of reason and of truth. Let it be shewn by our dispassionate deliberations, that the Union of the two Countries will be attended with many benefits to Ireland ; let it be recorded that we are disposed to confer those benefits to the utmost extent compatible with our own essential interests. Let this be done :—The calm hour of reflection will convince Ireland that the objections so hastily urged on her part are unsound and fallacious.

I do not think it necessary, my Lords, to attempt the examination of those objections. They have been amply confuted both in this Country and in Ireland. The unconstitutional doctrine which denies the competency of Parliament to effect an Union, and to operate what (by an inference falsely conceived and idly expressed) is called "its own extinction," was exploded even in the beginning of this century. It has been revived in the schools of modern democracy by the admirers of the sovereignty of the people, and accordingly has the strongest claims to contempt and rejection.

I propose, however, before I proceed to the commercial considerations, to examine the nature of that independence, which, as some advisers of the people of Dublin assert, will be subverted and destroyed by the consolidation of the two Legislatures. I think it important to ascertain the value of what Ireland is told she will lose, before I proceed to appreciate what it is that she will gain.

I recognize that independence of the Irish Legislature, abstractedly considered, as secured by the arrangement of 1782; but however perfect the independence may be in principle, it must at all times and in the nature of things be mutilated, and most imperfect in practice. We cannot shut our eyes against the truths presented by the map of Europe, and by the notoriety of the relative situation, size, and population, of the two Islands.

What then in point of fact is the independence of a country which has no means of defence, or security, or self-preservation, but through the aid and protection of its more powerful neighbour?

If two countries so circumstanced take adverse lines of conduct, a struggle must ensue, and either the weaker of the two must be overruled, or confusion and all the evils of war must follow. If, on the other hand, there should prevail between the two an uniform system and uniform principles of conduct, in leading points

of common concern, the weaker must be presumed to have thus far sacrificed, virtually and habitually, its exercise of independent power.

Let us, my Lords, apply this dilemma to the known and principal objects of national independence !

Has Ireland, or can she have, the power of negotiating, controuling, or even of rejecting treaties, notwithstanding that those treaties may involve the most essential interests of the British empire, of which she forms a part ? Has she the means of protecting her own commerce, or of establishing colonies, or of making and holding conquests ? Has she any property, or direct concern in the acquisitions made by the fleets and armies of the Sovereign ? Has she, or can she have, any naval force ? And is not the direction of her military force necessarily conformable to the opinion of British Ministers responsible only to the British Parliament ? Has she, in short, or can she have, any control whatever, or any interference, or even any concern, otherwise than in a visionary and abstract claim, re-

pecting the imperial transactions of peace and war, alliances and confederacies? Has she, even in the exercise of legislation, any access to the Royal sanction, otherwise than through British Ministers not amenable to her Parliament, and under the Great Seal of the British Chancellor.

But I wave all these considerations; though they ought to be strong inducements to Ireland not merely to accede to the proposed Union, but to seek and solicit it. I wave them all, and will suppose Ireland to have every advantage possessed by Great Britain, and in an equal degree. I will suppose the two Islands to be similar, in size and population; in wealth, cultivation, and commerce; in conquests and in colonies; and to be placed upon the globe within a few leagues of each other. Still however with one executive power; and with separate and independent legislatures.

Will any individual of sound mind assert, that the entire Union of two countries such as I have described would be degrading or detrimental to either?

And by what line of reasoning shall a different inference be drawn when the two countries, thus nearly adjoining, happen to be utterly unequal in size and in force? I contend that the inferior of the two, so situated, never can retain its connexion and at the same time possess either real independence or an uncontrouled and safe prosperity, otherwise than by uniting with its more powerful neighbour; and that its wish for Union ought to increase in proportion to its inferiority in force.

I might rest this assertion on the experience of Ireland herself. For is it not true, that whilst Great Britain has gradually advanced in civilization of manners, and in every art, science, and improvement, which can give happiness, honour, and security, to nations and to individuals; Ireland possessing the same climate, a fruitful soil, and excellent ports, and a numerous people, to whom the Common Parent of all gave great acuteness and ingenuity, has nevertheless been at all times involved in comparative disorder, poverty, turbulence, and wretchedness? I might add, without exaggeration, that in the

600 years since the reign of Henry II. there has been more unhappiness in Ireland, than in any other civilized nation, not actually under the visitation of pestilence, or of internal war. And all these evils may be traced to the disjointed and jarring action of two unequal powers, closely adjacent to each other, possessing the same interests and subject to the same Crown, but with separate legislatures.

But why should I confine myself to times in which a persecuting policy was avowedly exercised against Ireland, upon principles of commercial jealousy? Let us now look to a period within the memory of most of us; the period immediately previous to the attainment of what Ireland was pleased to call a free trade and a free constitution.

Many of your Lordships were Members of this House, whilst the British Parliament still continued to assert and to exercise the claim to make laws for Ireland, as "being subject to the imperial Crown of Great Britain." Ireland at that time held the functions of legislation

more in ceremony than in substance. Her laws originated in the Privy Councils of the two kingdoms, and were prepared and approved by the English Attorney-General. And even when a law had passed through the Irish Parliament, it was still liable to be corrected, changed, or suppressed, by the British Cabinet.

Ireland was then also as subordinate in judicature as in legislation. We made her laws, and we interpreted them. Appeals from the decisions of her judges were to the Courts of Westminster and to this House. It may also be recollected, that at the time to which I refer, the hereditary revenue of Ireland was almost sufficient for the support of Government; and the Irish army was established under the British Mutiny-Bill; and afterwards under a Mutiny-Bill passed in Ireland, but made perpetual.

I was not sorry that such a system should cease. It certainly did not allow to Ireland more than the name of the British Constitution, or more than the semblance and mockery of a free government.

But, my Lords, I was not so short-sighted as to persuade myself that, because the Irish freedom, as it was called, took place, Irish prosperity would be the consequence, unless much more could be done.

The law of Poynings, degrading and galling as it might be, nevertheless, united the Laws and Constitution of the two kingdoms. And the appellant jurisdiction of this House, justly and greatly respected by the Irish themselves, assimilated their jurisprudence to ours. When those links of connexion were broken, it was evident that Ireland must soon suffer disadvantages much greater than those which had so long depressed her. Neither prosperity, nor tranquillity, nor safety were to be expected from a government founded in the pretensions of a small part of the community to monopolize the representation, patronage, and resources of the whole. The insufficiency of such a system had been felt and lamented for a century, even whilst it was controuled, directed, and supported by the Protestant Parliament of this Protestant kingdom. Now that it was ceasing to be connected with that

Parliament, it became more than ever unsatisfactory to the bulk of the Irish nation, and utterly incompetent and unsafe with respect to the general interests of the British empire.

And here, my Lords, it may add some little weight to my reasonings, if I may be permitted to explain that I have at all times endeavoured to promote the commercial prosperity and constitutional freedom of Ireland; and that what I am now going to state is the result, not of new motives, but of long meditation, and of opinions repeatedly avowed. In doing this, I must necessarily make a short reference to past transactions; but that reference will be found connected, in all its parts, with the business now before us.

So early as in 1779, I stated and published* the expediency of that enlarged system of commerce which was then demanded by Ireland, and which was granted by us a few months afterwards. In 1780, I went to Ireland as Chief Secretary in a Vice-Royalty, which at its close

* Fourth Letter to the Earl of Carlisle.

(in 1782) received, from the Irish Parliament, strong assurances* of national gratitude and respect. In the session of 1781, I was specially named, with the Recorder of Dublin, to be of the Committee for the Bill which extended to Ireland the writ of Habeas Corpus by an Irish law. In the same session, I promoted the Bill for making the Irish Judges independent. I then, also, framed the whole institution of the Bank of Ireland, and introduced the Act which established it.

In 1782, I was the first to propose, in the British Parliament, the repeal of the Statute, 6 Geo. I. which asserted the right to bind Ireland by British laws. When I made the proposition, it was treated, by some persons who now hear me, as violent and precipitate, and as dictated by a party animosity and peevishness, which in truth I never felt. That incident is become matter of history; and I may now say, without scruple, that my conduct was governed by what I conceived to be a just sense of minis-

* See Appendix, No. 2.

terial and personal engagements. The repeal of the declaratory statute had long been thought desirable by the Government and Vice-Royalty under which I was serving, and my endeavour to procure that repeal had been the only stipulation made with me, by some leading persons, as the honourable price of their support. I allude to individuals who now hold very high situations in Ireland, and with whom I have ever since lived in full confidence and cordial friendship.

It is, my Lords, in most cases, objectionable, to refer to the printed statements of Parliamentary debates. Whatever ability or fairness may be employed by the reporter, we know that such statements are generally erroneous;—still, however, it may happen that the substance and accuracy of particular passages may be verified (as far as human evidence can go) by the context and by other circumstances. Subject to this caution, I solicit your Lordships' attention to the sentiments attributed to me at the epoch to which I am alluding. It was in January, 1783. A noble Viscount, then in the

House of Commons, proposed * a Bill “for re-
 “moving all doubts concerning the exclusive
 “rights in the Parliament and Courts of Ire-
 “land in matters of legislation and judicature.”

“Mr. Eden stated and avowed his opinion,
 “that it was for the interest of an empire that
 “a supremacy of legislation, over all its consti-
 “tuent parts, should reside within the metropo-
 “lis of the empire.”—“He reminded Mr. Fox,
 “that he (Mr. Eden) had consented to the abo-
 “lition of the appellant jurisdiction, and to the
 “alteration of Poyning’s law, in the confidence
 “only of measures being taken, pursuant to the
 “resolutions and address, to establish the con-
 “nexion of the two Kingdoms on a firm and
 “permanent basis.”—“He had relied on a
 “treaty being opened, between the two Parlia-
 “ments, for the purposes of arranging not only
 “commercial points, but all the great questions
 “involved in the future events of peace and
 “war, foreign alliances, commercial treaties, li-
 “mitation of armies, building and support of

* Debrett’s Parliamentary Register, vol. ix. p. 142, 143. 153.

“ navies, proportionable supplies, with the whole
 “ immense detail under each of those heads.
 “ He should then, and not till then, think that
 “ the connexion was established. And when
 “ the two Kingdoms had thus realized *one con-*
 “ *stitution*, one commerce, one king, one enemy,
 “ and one fate, it would become impossible for
 “ any man to wish the prosperity of the one
 “ country more ardently and more earnestly
 “ than the prosperity of the other.”

My Lords, the import of those expressions
 certainly went to the full extent of Union.—
 I may appeal to what passed, two years after-
 wards, on the occasion of the Irish Propositions.
 It happened to me to take a considerable share
 in the debates of that session, and to insist that
 one of two lines, respecting our commerce with
 Ireland, was proper to be adopted—either, that
 arrangements between the two countries should
 be settled by negotiation and treaty, as between
 two independent nations, giving equivalents for
 advantages interchanged; or, that an union of
 commerce, policy, and legislation, should take
 place. Many respectable and most intelligent

manufacturers concurred in those opinions, which were strongly urged in their addresses to Parliament.—“ We are fully convinced (said “ the Manchester Petition) that no system but “ what prescribes a participation of burdens as “ well as of advantages can be fair, equitable, “ or permanent; and, therefore, that a com- “ plete Union is the best means of establishing “ harmony and good will between the two “ nations.”

The General Chamber of British Manufacturers published, on the 18th May, 1785, some objections to the amended Irish Resolutions; when, after stating the expediency of “ becom- “ ing one people under one parliament,” they added, that “ a real Union with Ireland, under “ one legislature, would take away every diffi- “ culty.”

These suggestions were the result of plain sense, and strongly applicable to the questions then under discussion. I think them equally applicable to the actual existing situation of the two countries.

It became a general opinion that uniformity of law must accompany the communication of permanent advantages; and those who had introduced the Commercial Propositions, admitted the doctrine, with the wisdom and liberality which have so long distinguished their conduct. The fourth article was accordingly introduced as an amendment, expressly stating, that "the laws for trade and navigation should be the same in Great Britain and in Ireland." The Irish Parliament in 1780, on being admitted to a direct trade with our Colonies, had already recognized the same principle, and still act under it; but in 1785, such a condition was not reconcileable to the new notions of liberty. The present Speaker of Ireland combated those new notions with much eloquence, ingenuity, and force, in a speech which would derive great credit from the known ability and accuracy of the reporter, even if the report had not always been understood in this instance to be faithful and authentic. † Some of Mr. Grattan's expressions on that occasion deserve to be recollected. He op-

† Sketch of the Debate of August 12, 1785, by W. Woodfall, p. 105 to p. 112.

posed the Propositions :—“ We are told (said he)
 “ that the laws respecting commerce and naviga-
 “ tion should be similar ; and it is *inferred*, that
 “ Ireland should subscribe the laws of England
 “ on those subjects.”—“ It is an Union, an inci-
 “ pient and a creeping Union ; a virtual Union,
 “ establishing one will in the general concerns
 “ of commerce and navigation, and reposing
 “ that will in the Parliament of Great Britain ;
 “ an Union, where our Parliament preserves its
 “ existence after it has lost its authority.” “ I
 “ consider myself as opposing an Union *in*
 “ *limine*, and that argument for Union which
 “ makes similarity of law and community of
 “ interest a pretence for extinction of constitu-
 “ tion.”*—In this instance I can agree with
 Mr. Grattan, and the opinion is well and ably
 expressed. A commercial system so settled
 would certainly imply an equality of commerce
 purchased by an inequality of constitution. Si-
 milarity of law in the two countries can only
 be secured, either by virtual Union, in which the
 Legislature of the one country must be under-

* Sketch of the Debate of August 12, 1785, by W.
 Woodfall, p. 31.

stood to controul and supersede the Legislature of the other ; or by the incorporating Union and blending of the two Legislatures, so as to place on an equal basis the liberties of both countries. And yet this similarity of law is indispensable in communicating to Ireland a full and permanent commerce, which alone can give to her people, employment, capital, opulence, and industry.

Such, my Lords, were the impressions and reasonings which determined me to call for the accounts now under our view. And having fully considered them, I venture to repeat what I said in moving for them, that the commercial interests exhibited and proved in these papers will have more effect, than any other consideration, in finally accomplishing the Union of the two kingdoms.

It would, my Lords, be grating to the feelings of us all, to state to Ireland, that she is chained down, though by her own prejudices, to a weak and inefficient independence, subject to incessant collisions, and inseparable from mis-

fortune and humiliation : I should think it ungenerous to make such a statement, if it were not in my power to present to her at the same time a real and permanent independence, accompanied by a full participation of British opulence, British greatness, and British freedom, with its best companion, British security.

A nation with plain and undisguised truths of this magnitude before her eyes, cannot long be influenced by misrepresentations, or by the partial interests of a few, who may struggle to retain an ascendancy incompetent and irreconcilable to the happiness of the whole.

I shall not advert more particularly to the Irish metropolis, though it would be easy to shew that Dublin will be greatly advanced in employment, population, rents, and wealth, by the effect of the proposed measure. The produce of the Income-Tax will ascertain, that the opulence of our own metropolis depends in a small proportion on the occasional residence of the members of the Legislature ; that opulence is chiefly derived from the activity and energy of

our commercial credit and capitals; which can never be communicated to the Sister Kingdom otherwise than by a Legislative Union. But I wish to speak of Ireland in general. The interests of her merchants and manufacturers, and of the owners and occupiers of land, will best be understood by a short analysis of the printed accounts to which I now solicit your Lordships particular attention.

It is impossible, my Lords, to open and contemplate these papers without exultation of mind, at so brilliant an exhibition of the increasing prosperity of Great Britain, and of her unexampled pre-eminence among nations. We see her, mistress of the trade of the world, and possessing a navy amply adequate to the protection of such a trade. We saw without surprise the late avowal of our enemy, that she has not one merchant vessel upon the sea.

These papers will give to your Lordships, what has never before been attempted, the true valuation of our whole commerce according to current prices and to other documents, the ac-

curacy of which is incontestable. It has been a task of great labour and difficulty, and could not have been completed but by the intelligent exertions and well tried accuracy and ability of the present Inspector-General.

It appears, accordingly, that the total value of our imports and exports in the year 1798* was ninety-five millions sterling;—above twenty-two millions higher than the average value of the four last years of peace.

This astonishing amount will be placed beyond all suspicion of exaggeration, when I remark, that the true value of the imports, amounting to 46,963,000*l*. has been obtained from a strict enquiry into the prices current, as well as from the duties payable at a specific rate, in proportion to the true value of each article, which value has been adjusted by the officer with the importers and dealers. The valuation of the exports, amounting to above forty-eight millions, has been ascertained in a manner nearly

* See Appendix, No. 3.

similar; and it is not to be presumed, that however undoubted the integrity of the merchants may be, they have paid *ad valorem* duties beyond the true estimate; and certainly the total, which already much exceeds all our prior calculations, might fairly be carried to above one hundred millions sterling.

If it should occur to any Noble Lord, that the apparent balance of our trade, being only one million, is less than might be supposed, I beg leave to remark, that in order to arrive at the true balance, we must recollect, that for a great part of the imports from our East and West India settlements, and also from the fisheries, no price whatever is remitted beyond what is necessary to carry forwards and to maintain the cultivation and supply of those settlements and fisheries. A great addition must therefore be made to the favourable balance, which, probably, is little short of eight or ten millions. Some respectable calculations go much higher. It is, however, sufficient to know and to be convinced, that the balance, whether

more or less, is as high as the real and permanent interests of our commerce will bear.

The British manufactures exported in 1798, and which make a part of the great total of ninety-five millions, amounted to no less a sum than 36,600,000l.* being 6,477,000l. higher than the average export of our manufactures in the four last years of peace.

It may not be immaterial to keep in view these general outlines of that commerce, the unqualified participation of which we are offering to Ireland. I will now proceed to the more confined discussion of the trade between the two countries.

The annual average import into Great Britain from Ireland, during the last four years of peace, was about 4,900,000l.; and for the three years ending the 5th of January, 1799, it was above 5,500,000l.; being an increase of about 600,000l.

* See Appendix, No. 3.

Upon our intire trade with Ireland, the annual balance in her favour is above two millions ; and upon the interchange of the products and manufactures of the two countries, the balance in favour of Ireland is above 3,400,000l.*

And here, my Lords, allow me to specify the principal articles of our commerce with Ireland, and to examine the causes which give, to her, apparent advantages of great extent, and at the same time, under her present circumstances, of little avail.

The printed statements shew, that two-fifths of the average exports from Great Britain to Ireland, for the last three years, consisted of East Indian, Colonial, and Foreign articles. We sent them to the amount of 1,468,000l.: we gave an entire drawback of the duties ; and the revenue annually received by Ireland on this branch of our trade was about 345,000l. British money.†

* See Appendix, No. 4 and 5.

† See Appendix, No. 6.

The remaining three-fifths of the British exports to Ireland may be classed under the heads of British manufactures and products. The total average value of the manufactures exported to Ireland, when distinguished from what comes under the description of products, was 1,640,000*l.*; being about one-twentieth of our whole export of manufactures. The principal article is that of woollens, in value 686,000*l.*; about one-twelfth of our woollens exported. The other articles separately taken are of small amount, and consist of cottons, cotton-yarn, wrought-iron, leather, glass, earthen-ware, &c.

The articles of British products exported to Ireland are essential to the Irish manufactures, such as oak-bark, coals, bar-iron, hops, lead, and salt. The most important article is that of coals. Your Lordships see, that we annually send to Ireland above 300,000 chaldrons, subject to a duty of only 1*s.* 2*d.* per chaldron; at the same time that our coasting trade pays 5*s.* 9*d.*; and that the duties paid in the metropolis of England amount to 9*s.* 3*d.* A revenue of 600,000*l.* is raised in this kingdom

on coals: Ireland, however, pays no more than 17,900*l.* for the duties on all that we supply to her: and an Irish duty is levied in Dublin of 1*s.* 9*d.* per ton, with the exemption only of such coals as may be used to promote against us the rival manufactures of glass and refined sugar.

Other products, such as allum, bark, bar-iron, hops, lead, and salt, are subject to similar remarks; they go free from this country, and pay considerable duties in Ireland.

The average revenue raised in Ireland on British products and manufactures is 194,000*l.*—The revenue raised in Great Britain on Irish products and manufactures is 10,850*l.*

I shall now, my Lords, proceed to examine how far the same liberal system prevails respecting the exports from Ireland to Great Britain, and to the British settlements.

I admit, that on some articles of manufacture our protecting duties are nearly prohibitory. But I venture to assert, that the intire abolition

of all those duties would, in the present relative circumstances of Ireland, have no effect whatever. If, indeed, the two kingdoms were blended in their legislatures and interests, so as to establish, between the opposite sides of St. George's Channel, the same sort of connexion, interest, and intercourse, which now subsists between the opposite banks of the Humber or the Thames, I willingly believe, that the gradual extension of English capital, and the gradual interchange of workmen, would transfer to Ireland a full participation not only in the woollen and cotton manufactures, but in many other branches of employment. The credit and capital, which are now pent up within Great Britain, would then descend like water to a level, and diffuse themselves equally over both kingdoms. There is nothing in such an operation, when maturely arranged and prepared, which ought not to satisfy those, on the one hand, who dread the removal of their wealth to a country where taxes are comparatively low; or those, on the other hand, who affect to dread an increased taxation. The virtual and gradual equalizing of burdens, as well as of benefits,

is implied in all these statements, and would be accomplished by an united, wise, and provident legislature, without any shock to the interests of either contracting party.

In the mean time, it cannot have escaped your Lordships observation, that the duties alluded to are on articles which we are exporting in considerable quantities to Ireland, such as woollens, cottons, and leather manufactured.—Let it also be remarked, that our woollens are subject in Ireland, on a fair average value of the whole export, to about $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. *ad valorem*; and yet the Irish market takes our woollens to the amount of 686,000l. a-year.

Our cotton goods pay a duty in the Irish ports of 9l. 18s. 5d. per cent. *ad valorem*; and yet the value of our cottons imported into Ireland is about 70,000l. a-year.

But the instance of leather manufactured and tanned is still more remarkable. We bring the chief raw material from Ireland, charged there with an export duty, and we prepare it and

send it back to Ireland, to the annual amount of 152,000*l.* It is subject to an import duty paid there, of nearly 10 per cent. *ad valorem*.—

We are, nevertheless, able to enter into competition with Ireland even in her own market, though she possesses the raw material, and though we supply her with tanner's bark free of all duty.

I will not detain your Lordships farther in the discussion of articles which, it is evident, would not be sent to us even if all the duties were removed. I think it sufficient to have shewn, that the existence of those duties is in effect no exception to the liberality of our general system.

There are, however, some products and manufactures which Ireland is able to supply to a considerable extent.

The cattle and provisions, furnished annually by Ireland to Great Britain, amount to no less a sum than two millions sterling annually. A duty too, producing about 30,000*l.* is charged in

Ireland on that whole export: and yet we prohibit in time of peace the admission of provisions from other countries, and do not even permit the United States of America to send provisions to our islands and fisheries. I do not wish, at present, to examine the policy of these exclusive encouragements, nor whether it may be a detriment to our own agriculture to import Irish provisions duty free. The quantity purchased by us is apparently large, and such as at first sight might seem difficult to be replaced, if ever the channel of supply should be suddenly checked. But when it is considered in the scale of our general consumption, its importance is much diminished. I find, for instance, that all the beef which we take from Ireland, including what is furnished for our fleets, is less than one-third of what is annually sold in Smithfield.†

The only other article of Irish products, imported by us to any considerable amount, is that of oats, which may be stated at 200,000*l.* sterling.

See Appendix, No. 7.

I now come, my Lords, to the exported manufactures of Ireland, which are nearly comprized in the single article of linen. I am content to take the valuation as it is given in the papers before us (1s. 5d. per yard,) though I believe it to be below the true average price. It appears, then, by the accounts on your table, that, in the last three years, the annual import of Irish linens (being thirty-seven millions of yards) amounted to 2,500,000l. to which may be added linen-yarn, the valuation of which was 243,000l.

If any of your Lordships happen to be in possession of the accounts of the Irish Custom-house, you will find that the annual export of Irish linens, to all the world, is there stated at about forty millions of yards, and that seven-eighths of the whole, or thirty-five millions, are taken by Great Britain and her colonies.†— Such is the quantity and proportion imported for British consumption, free of duty, and under favour of a protecting duty equal to 25 per cent. imposed on the linen of all other countries!—

† See Appendix, No. 8.

and whatever part of that quantity is not consumed in England, is exported to other countries by the aid of British credit and of a British bounty.

How far this system may be beneficial to England; whether the duties on linens from the continent, with a total exemption in favour of Ireland, have tended to increase the restraints in foreign countries upon our manufactures; and whether, if the Russian and German linens were less discouraged by us, a larger demand for our woollens and cottons would not take place in return; are questions of great moment, which I am not now solicitous to discuss. The beneficial effects of such a system, with respect to Ireland at least, are not equivocal, and may be traced in the printed Report of the late Board of Trade in 1780. It appears, in that Report, that the linen manufactures of Ireland have been gradually raised to their present flourishing state, and are still rising in prosperity, solely by the operation and effect of British care and encouragement. The import into Great Britain, in 1743, when the present system commenced,

was 6,418,000 yards; in 1773, it was 17,876,000 yards; in 1783, 21,000,000 yards; and in 1798, 37,000,000 yards.

The export, with bounty, in 1743, was 40,900 yards; in 1773, 2,832,000 yards; and in 1798, 6,400,000 yards.

The foreign linens, in 1743, were three-fourths of our whole import; at present, they are only one-fourth.

But here, my Lords, I think it just and necessary to remark, that by our actual system we are subjecting ourselves to one of two disadvantages; either to an increase of price equal to about 25 per cent. on the value, which falls on the consumer; or, to a proportionate loss of revenue:—and that the amount (being 25 per cent. on 2,600,000l.) is in either case 650,000l.

For, a moment's reflection will shew, that if the foreign linens, charged as they are with a duty of 25 per cent. can come into competition with the Irish, which are duty free, those

same foreign manufactures would soon be able to supply all our demand, and might be consumed at 25 per cent. below the present price, if they were relieved from duty as the Irish are. On the other hand, the Irish linens, if subjected to the foreign duties, must either be furnished by Ireland at 25 per cent. below their present price, or be driven out of the market. In this latter case, too, an addition of 650,000*l.* would be made to our revenue ; unless, indeed, the encouragement which such a change might give to our home-made linens should occasion a decrease in the general import.

Such are the effects of our liberality towards Ireland in this important manufacture, which constitutes in value nearly one-half of the Irish exports to all the world. And there now lies on that table a Bill, which we are passing, to continue our bounties on Irish linens. And yet, a few weeks ago, the following phrases were gravely addressed, by an eminent person, to the county of Louth.

“ In truth, I see much danger, and a probable decrease of our trade and manufactures, from the measure of a Legislative Union, and I cannot conceive any advantage to them from it.”

“ If the linen manufacture rests at all on any compact, that compact was made with the Irish Parliament, the extinction of which takes away a security we had found adequate, and leaves it without the protection of its natural guardians, who, by *their* vigilance, *their* regulations, and *their* bounties, have more than doubled its exports within a few years. As an Irishman, then, I should oppose the measure.”

I know nothing of the compact here alluded to; and I am unable to annex sense to the word “extinction,” as applied to the projected Union of the two legislatures. But I perfectly understand, and know, that the annual importation of Irish linens, to the amount of nearly three millions sterling, is a sort of monopoly given to Ireland in the British market; and that

the existence and continuance of that monopoly do not depend on the vigilance, regulations, and bounties, of the Irish Parliament, but on *our* liberality, *our* regulations, and *our* bounties; and are intirely subject to the gratuitous favour, good will, and dispensations of the British Parliament.

It will also be obvious, to the most superficial observer, that if Ireland has obtained and enjoyed these advantages, through the indulgence of the British separate legislature, in despite of any spirit of rivalry or jealousy, she will be more likely to increase than to forfeit them, when she shall be incorporated as a part of the same kingdom, and when Irish representatives shall form a proportion of the united Parliament.

In addition to the indulgences which I have described, we have given to Ireland many privileges for the encouragement of her fisheries. We have also relaxed the whole system of our navigation laws, and permit the produce of our colonies to be imported to us through the Irish

ports. I do not lay much stress on the probable benefits of these concessions. They were, indeed solicited as of great importance. But Ireland, nevertheless, continues to be supplied through Great Britain not only with fish, to the amount of 113,000l. annually; she also receives rum, sugars, indigo, and tobacco, circuitously (and with all the expence of landing, warehousing, reshipping, commission, &c.) to the annual amount of more than 500,000l. at the same time that her direct importation of these articles is valued at not more than 140,000l. a year. Nor will she ever be able to avail herself of our concessions, without the aid of British capital and confidence, which can only be obtained by Union. Hitherto there hardly exists an instance of any considerable British House engaged in Ireland in Irish Partnership.

The general results are, that of the whole amount of Irish exports to all the world, about eight-ninths are sent to Great Britain and to

British dependencies ; * that of the exports from Ireland to Great Britain amounting in value to 5,600,000*l.* nearly the whole is received in our ports free of duty, but is subject to export duties in Ireland, and contributes there to her local revenue as a charge imposed on our consumption. On the other hand, that what we send to Ireland is about a tenth only of our whole export ; that about two-fifths of what is so sent to Ireland, consist of foreign articles exported free of duty. That though the intire trade of Ireland with this country is about one-ninth of our whole commerce, the revenue received upon it, instead of being one-ninth of our customs, is less than the 140th part. For example, † that Ireland pays only 47,500*l.* in duties of customs upon the whole of her trade with us, at the same time that we are receiving from other nations in customs 6,850,000*l.* and even from that small amount of 47,500*l.* we pay on the average about 35,000*l.* a-year in bounties on Irish linens.

* See Appendix, No. 9. † See Appendix, No. 3.

But it is not merely that the imports from Ireland are free of duty here. What we export to Ireland is highly charged by her. She accordingly raised annually on her trade with Great Britain and the British dependences, by the average of the last three years, a revenue of 622,000*l.* * of which sum 194,000*l.* were levied on English products and manufactures. The duties which she levies annually on her whole trade with all other parts amount to about 209,000*l.*

And yet, notwithstanding all these encouragements, Ireland, with a population equal perhaps to one-third of the British population, has a trade equal to not more than one-ninth of the trade of Great Britain.

And, lastly, that the small and disproportionate commerce which she possesses is almost intirely dependant on British generosity, and on laws made in Great Britain.

* See Appendix, No, 6.

My Lords, there is a well known line,

Isthæc commemoratio

Quasi exprobratio est immemoris benefici.

I mention it merely to deprecate and disclaim the application of it. The statement which I this day submit to your Lordships is not given grudgingly, no for the purpose of conveying either reproach or menace. It is my sincere wish neither to irritate nor to alarm; but to conciliate, and, if possible, to convince.

It would be idle to imagine, that in a British Parliament, this great question can be debated with flattery, and complaisance, and reserves, and no Irish interests only. The people of Ireland ought not to be kept in ignorance that numerous and essential benefits are conferred on them without reciprocity; but that those benefits, without Union, remain liable, on any eventual disagreement, to a sudden explosion, with the utter ruin of all the Irish interests dependant on trade and manufactures.

I have not hesitated to display these truths to our own manufacturers and merchants ; because I know it to be their wish, as it always has been mine, to extend to Ireland, even without Union, every accession of prosperity that can be made compatible with our own well being and security. If indeed it should ever appear, that Ireland were seeking strength at our expence, in order to make that strength operate to the weakening of the British empire, then and then only, would the manufacturers and merchants object loudly to the system of gratuitous concessions ; and then, and only then, would I join my voice to theirs.

And surely it cannot be either unfriendly or ungenerous to point out to the party obliged, the means of giving both permanency and effect to the benefits which are conferred. Can the superior country be expected to enrich, beyond certain limits, the inferior, without having some security that the wealth, and strength, and resources of the one may be considered as the wealth, strength, and resources of the other.

Or is it to be expected that capitals and commercial credit shall be transferred to a country struggling under an anomalous, incompetent, and disturbed government, and maintaining a claim of right to adopt at any time adverse connections and interests? Nothing less than Union can satisfy these questions. We cannot rest on the flimsy and undefined protestation so often repeated, and so imperfectly realized, that "the affections of Ireland are unalienable, and that both kingdoms shall stand and fall together." Let the Union take place, and all commercial distinctions, and all political jealousies will be annihilated; for there can be no competition between two parts of the same kingdom, having incorporated Interests directed by one legislature.

These reasonings are not new; in the discussions between the Scotch and English Commissioners, under Charles II.* it was admitted by the Scots, that, without Union, they could

* See the Report lately printed by Mr. Bruce, and the State Papers which are annexed to it, No, 36 and No, 43,

have no pretensions to commercial privileges beyond what might be given to any alien power; and that all indulgences enjoyed whilst the two nations remained separate, must in their nature, be subject to English controul and to English laws. And it was then also particularly stated, that if Ireland possessed any advantages in the English trade, they depended solely on her being bound by English laws; or by laws made in Ireland, but originating in the the English privy Council.

What then, my Lords, are the multiplied and inestimable benefits which our Address and Propositions hold out to Ireland?—The preservation of her actual advantages, the extension of capitals, the increased employment of her people with the consequent cultivation and softening of their minds and manners; and, above all, the introduction of a middle class, one of the great wants of Ireland, and the most important link of security between the highest and lowest orders,—Still leaving to her the same constitution, the same liberties, the same laws,

and the same privileges, that she enjoys a present.

We do not, however, propose this measure as calculated at once to dispel the cloud of foreign war and domestic treasors, which has so long darkened the Irish atmosphere. Undoubtedly the Union of the two countries might tend to correct the pestilential exhalations which prevail. But that effect would be gradual, and perhaps slow. I look rather to the effect which would be produced on a return of peace. Ireland would then be governed as the rest of the British Empire is governed; a new order of things would take place; and the manners, principles, and opinions, of the two Islands would at last be assimilated. Can it, my Lords, be offensive to add, that Ireland ought to feel an honourable pride in being invited to an Union with all those blessings of Industry, order, and law, which have rendered Great Britain the Glory and bulwark of civil society, and have secured to her the envy and admiration of the World.

And here I shall close; trusting that with fairness and moderation I have urged what occurs to me, in support of a measure which, in the emphatical words of the King's message, "may best tend to improve and perpetuate a connection essential for the common security of the two Kingdoms, and to augment and consolidate the strength, power, and resources, of the British Empire."

We know that this measure is dreaded by the revolutionists of the day: we have seen that the separation of the two kingdoms is the first object of the unprincipled and implacable nation which is making a wild and cruel war on the liberties of mankind.—The separation also of Scotland from England was in like manner sought in the very beginning of the contest.— "We rejoice (said the Society of United Irishmen in Dublin to their Delegates in Scotland, in 1792) that the Scots do not consider themselves as merged and melted down into another country, and that in the great question

“to which our address alludes, they are still
“Scotland.”

The Revolutionary Committee of Nine, assembled in Dublin on the 9th April, 1795, expressed themselves in the same spirit, by a resolution,
“collectively and individually to resist even their
“own emancipation, if made to depend on the
“fatal measure of Union with the Sister king-
“dom.”

My LORDS !

In this awful period of crimes and calamities, amidst the subversion of states and empires, and when the whole system of human affairs seems to be convulsed and endangered, the great and glorious fabric of British liberty stands unmoved and unshaken. We offer to Ireland the full participation of our happiness and security.—And unless Providence shall have withdrawn from her all mercy and protecting influence; unless the dispensations are to be such as

* Report of Committee of Secrecy, p. 12.

to number her among the wrecks of nations, she will gladly and gratefully receive our offer, and will become an integral part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.—

There remains one point, my Lords, on which before I sit down, I must say a few words.—Some of the Noble Lords who seemed to oppose the measure of Union, have been pleased to talk much, though somewhat indefinitely, respecting what is most improperly termed, Catholic Emancipation. I am not disposed to follow them into the entanglements of a discussion in which I see no possible good, and much possible mischief.—Nor is such discussion now necessary. Our Fifth and Eight Resolutions are clear and intelligible, and do not seem either to require or to admit any amendment.—It has long been my opinion, that whatever may be the indulgences, whether more or less limited, to the Catholics in England; the measure of those indulgences ought to guide our discretion with respect to the Catholics in Ireland. I am of opinion, that such a rule is best calculated

for the security happiness, and true interests, of both persuasions. I sincerely lamented the abrupt and wide departure from that rule in 1793. But I will not look with an unavailing regret to what must now be considered as irrevocable. And I rejoice that our future adherence to that rule must be one of the many important consequences of a Legislative Union.



APPENDIX.

No. 1.

THE Report made in the Irish House Commons in 1703, by the Committee on the State of the Nation, concluded with a resolution that Her Majesty be moved. “that through her favourable interposition her subjects of this kingdom may be relieved from the Calamities they now lie under, by a full enjoyment of their Constitution, or by a more firm Union with England.” This representation was voted by the House.

The Address of the Irish House of Lords, 1st October, 1703, concluded thus. “As we are sensible that our preservation is owing to our being united to the Crown of England, so we are convinced it would tend to our farther security and happiness, to have a more comprehensive and intire Union with that kingdom.”

The answers returned were in general terms, and not encouraging.

On the 4th March, 1704, the Speaker, in presenting the Bills, referred pointedly to the representation above-mentioned, as having had the unanimous voice and consent of a full House, and prayed the Lord-Lieutenant's support to carry it into execution,

On the 9th. July, 1707, the Irish Commons, in their Address to the Queen, entreated Her
“ to add greater lustre and strength to the
“ Crown, by a yet more comprehensive Union.”

The Address of the Irish House of Lords on the 15th July, 1707, was expressed in terms still stronger in favour of an Union.



No. 2.

*Extract from the Earl of Carlisle's Answer to the
Speaker of the House of Commons of Ireland, 17th
April, 1782.*

“ I request you to offer to that House,
“ where you so worthily preside, my most sin-
“ cere thanks for this mark of national appro-
“ bation. It is with cordial pleasure that I
“ shall ever reflect on the fortunate combination
“ of circumstances, if by them I have been
“ enabled to encourage the commercial in-
“ terests of the kingdom, to promote the great
“ improvements of this metropolis, to give a
“ new spring to public credit, to see the liberty
“ of the subject secured by law, to add weight
“ and dignity to the administration of justice,
“ conciliate to His Majesty's government, every
“ persuasion and description of men, and finally
“ to mature the means of uniting a loyal
“ people in general harmony and happiness.”

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No. 4.

ANNUAL AVERAGE of the Three Years preceding the 5th of January, 1799, of the true Value of the Products and Manufactures of IRELAND imported into GREAT BRITAIN: And also, of the Products and Manufactures of GREAT BRITAIN exported to IRELAND for the same Period, with the Balance in favour of IRELAND.

Value of the Products and Manufactures of Ireland imported into Great Britain.	Value of the Products and Manufactures of Great Britain exported to Ireland.	Excess of Balance in favour of Ireland.
£. 5,510,825	£. 2,087,672	£. 3,425,153

No. 5.

ANNUAL AVERAGE of the Three Years preceding the 5th of January, 1799, of the true Value of the IRISH Products and Manufactures, and of the Foreign Merchandize, annually imported into GREAT BRITAIN from IRELAND; likewise of BRITISH Products and Manufactures, and of Foreign Merchandize, exported from GREAT BRITAIN to IRELAND, for the same Period, with the Balance in Favour of IRELAND.

Total Value of Imports into Great Britain from Ireland.	Total Value of Exports from Great Britain to Ireland.	Excess or Balance in Favour of Ireland.
£. 5,612,689	£. 3,555,845	£. 2,056,844

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AN ACCOUNT of the Total true Value of the Imports into and Exports out of Great Britain in the Year 1799, distinguishing the Woollen and Cotton Manufactures and the Irish Linens, the Duties collected on the Linens imported, and the Bounties and Drawbacks on the Irish Linens exported, of the Gross Revenue of Customs collected on Imports and Exports.

IMPORTS

	Irish Linens.		Foreign Linens.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
	Yards.	£.	Yards.	£.
Ireland . .	35,300,610	2,503,165	—	—
Other Parts	38,290	2,712	16,757,409	832,409
Total . . .	35,338,900	2,505,877	16,757,409	832,409

EXPORTS

	British Manufactures exported.				Irish Linens.		
	Value of Woollen Manufactures.	Value of Cotton Manufactures.	Value of all other British Manufactures.	Total Value of British Manufactures exported.	Quantity.	Value.	Bounty.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	Yards.	£.	£.
Ireland . .	801,397	144,771	1,904,133	2,850,301	—	—	—
Other Parts.	8,633,115	4,576,444	17,552,307	30,761,866	6,429,476	560,353	29,200
Total.	9,434,512	4,721,215	19,456,440	33,612,167	6,429,476	560,353	29,200

NOTE—The Bounty paid on IRISH Linens exported, on the Average of the Years 1790 to 1799, amounted to

No. 3.

and Exports from GREAT BRITAIN, in the Year ending the 5th of January,
and the Irish and Foreign Linens imported and exported, with the Amount of
s and Drawback paid on the Linens exported; together with the Amount
Exports in the above Year, and in all Cases distinguishing Ireland.

IMPORTS.

Foreign Linens.			Value of Imports From all other Parts.	Total Value of Imports.
y.	Value.	Duty.		
	£	£	£	£
1799	832,466	170,175	2,772,230 40,852,657	5,275,395 41,687,835
1799	832,466	170,175	43,624,887	46,963,230

EXPORTS.

Foreign Merchandize exported.

s.	Foreign Linens				Value of all other Articles of Foreign Merchandize exported.	Total Value of Foreign Mer- chandize ex- ported.	Total Value of British and Fo- reign Merchan- dize exported.	Gross Revenue of Customs collected on Imports and Exports.
	Bounty.	Quantity.	Value.	Drawback				
	£	Yards.	£	£	£	£	£	£
1793	29,232	3,585,744	227,709	32,553	1,412,504 12,187,323	1,412,504 12,975,385	4,262,805 43,737,251	47,542 6,852,293
1793	29,232	3,585,744	227,709	32,553	13,599,827	14,387,889	48,000,056	6,899,835

The Average of the Four Years preceding the 5th of January 1799,
amounted to 34,700l.

AVERAGE ANNUAL AMOUNT in the Three Years preceding the 25th of M^{arch} collected in IRELAND, on the EXPORTS from and IMPORTS into that Country, America, and all other Parts, other than Great Britain and her Dependences principal Articles in the Year ending March, 1798.

Duties collected on Goods Imported from and exported to the States of America.				Duties collected on Goods imported from and exported to all other Foreign Parts.			
Species of Goods.		Amount of Duty.		Species of Goods.		Amount of Duty.	
Inwards.		£.	s. d.	Inwards.		£.	s. d.
Tobacco		38929	19 2	Sugar, Muscov. . . .		5264	
Other Articles		1210	17 2	Herrings		4042	
				Salt		9313	
		40140	16 4	Wine, Port		34082	
				Spanish		4504	
				Wood, Deals		3466	
				Other Articles		11428	
				6 per Cent. . . .		1680	
				Total		73780	
Outwards.				Outwards.			
Sundry Articles amounting		146	4 5	Butter		3120	
				Other Articles		266	
						3387	
Total Inwards & Outwards 1798		40287	0 9			77167	
Ditto 1797		60243	13 6			165774	
Ditto 1796		27289	18 4			308219	
Annual medium in Irish Money		42606	17 6			183720	
Ditto in British Money		39329	1 0			169588	

25th of March, 1798, of the Duties
 Country, to and from the States of
 Dependences, distinguishing the prin-

Imported from and in Parts.			Total Duties of Customs collected in Ireland, and the Trade with all Parts other than Great Britain and the British Colonies.		
Amount of Duty.					
£.	s.	d.			
5264	4	7			
4042	5	0			
9313	3	6			
34082	6	8			
4504	8	6			
3466	5	2			
11428	0	7			
1680	0	0			
73780	14	0			
3120	9	0			
266	12	0			
3387	1	0			
77167	15	0			
65774	6	8			
308219	4	5			
83720	8	8	£.226327	6	2
69588	2	0	£.208917	10	0



AVERAGE ANNUAL AMOUNT, in the Three Years preceding the 25th M
tinguishing the Subsidies on Goods exported from the Duties collected on For
Merchandize imported through the Medium of Great Britain : Likewise the

Duties collected on British Manufactures imported into Ireland.						Duties collected on Irish Produce exported to Great Britain.							
Species of Goods.		Rate of Duty.			Amount of Duty collected.			Species of Goods.		Rate of Duty.			
		£.	s.	d.						£.	s.	d.	
Beer		0	4	8 $\frac{3}{4}$	per barr.	11,914	12	7	Beef		0	1	0
Coals		0	0	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	} per ton.	23,389	7	5	Bullocks and Cows		0	3	3
— into Dublin		0	1	9 $\frac{1}{2}$						Butter		0	1
Cottons.	Plain & colour'd	11	11	0	per cent.	12,357	0	2	Hogs		0	3	3
	Calico, white	11	11	0	per cent.				Hides, untanned		0	1	0
	— and 7 $\frac{3}{16}$ per yard								Pork		0	1	6
	— colour'd	0	1	2	per yard				Tallow		0	1	6
	Muslin, white	11	11	0	per cent.				Skins, calf		5	0	0
	— and 7 $\frac{3}{16}$ per yard								Yarn, linen		5	0	0
— colour'd		11	11	0	per cent.			Other articles					
— and 7 $\frac{3}{16}$ per yard													
Drapery, new		0	0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	per yard	29,430	8	11					
— old		0	0	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	per yard								
Earthen Ware		17	6	6	per cent.	3,463	18	8					
Glass Bottles		0	0	11	per doz.								
— Cases		0	4	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	each	3,011	8	5					
— Plates & Ware		11	11	0	per cent.								
Herrings		0	1	2 $\frac{3}{16}$	per barr.	4,139	18	6					
Hops		1	6	8	per cent.	27,435	5	0					
Hosiery, Cott. Stocks		11	11	0	per cent.	3,114	9	5					
Iron and Hardware		11	11	0	per cent.	5,676	7	5					
Salt, rock		3	0	0	per ton	21,438	9	6					
— white		0	2	0	per bush.	11,401	6	0					
Sugar, loaf		1	17	11	per cent.	18,321	11	3					
Other articles						52,255	7	1					
6 per Cent.						6,200	0	0					
Total in the Year ending 28th March, 1798						233,549	10	4					
Ditto 1797						199,745	6	8					
Ditto 1796						197,917	7	2					
Annual Medium in Irish Money						210,404	1	4					
Ditto in British Money						194,219	11	0					

25th March, 1798, of the Duties of Customs collected in IRELAND in her Commerce
 on Foreign Merchandize imported: Also, distinguishing Duties on Goods the Pro
 vide the Total Amount of the Duties of Customs on all the other Branches of the Tr

Irish Products and Manufactures ed to Great Britain.				Duties collected on Foreign Mer- chandize, imported through the Medium of Great Britain.				Total Duties col- lected on the Commercial In- tercourse with Great Britain.				Duties c tif							
Rate of Duty.				Amount of Duty.				Species of Goods.				Amount of Duty.				Species of			
s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	
1	0	per barr.	4,305	3	0	Groceries, Pepper	4,147	9	9	Sugar	Rum	Other A							
3	3	each	4,947	17	7	— Sugar	157,144	5	4										
1	6	per cent.	18,472	14	7	Silks	4,361	1	10	Spirits, Brandy	Geneva	Rum							
3	3		1,019	19	0	Iron, unwrought	3,177	6	3										
1	0	each	674	15	7	—	10,851	11	4										
1	6	per barr.	10,718	9	0	—													
1	6	per cwt.	916	12	6	Tea, Bohea . . .	60,173	2	5	Green									
0	0	per cent.	1,220	0	0	—	5,711	16	0										
0	0	per 120 lb.	5,081	10	0	Tobacco	144,199	0	0	Wine { French Madeira Port Spanish Rhenish	7,259	17	5						
			1,183	7	6	Other articles . .	10,489	5	10										
						6 per Cent. . . .	2,120	0	0										
			48,540	8	9		409,589	16	2		691,679	15	3						
			32,964	8	8		340,560	2	6		573,269	17	10						
			29,218	14	8		372,134	9	3		599,270	11	1						
			36,907	17	4		374,094	15	11		621,406	14	7						
			34,068	16	0		345,318	5	0		573,606	12	0						

1798, of the Duties of Customs collected in IRELAND in her Commercial Inter-
 merchandize imported: Also, distinguishing Duties on Goods the Produce of
 amount of the Duties of Customs on all the other Branches of the Trade of

Manufactures	Duties collected on Foreign Mer- chandize, imported through the Medium of Great Britain.		Total Duties col- lected on the Commercial In- tercourse with Great Britain.	Duties collected on Irish Colo-	
	Species of Goods.	Amount of Duty.		On Im-	Species of Goods.
Amount of Duty.					
£. s. d.		£. s. d.	£. s. d.		
4,305 3 0	Groceries, Pepper	4,147 9 9			Sugar
4,947 17 7	— Sugar	157,144 5 4			Rum
18,472 14 7	Silks	4,361 1 10			Other Articles
1,019 19 0	Iron, unwrought	3,177 6 3			
674 15 7	Spirits, Brandy				
10,718 9 0	— Geneva	10,851 11 4			
916 12 6	— Rum				
1,220 0 0	Tea, Bohea . . .	60,173 2 5			
5,081 10 0	— Green . . .	5,711 16 0			
1,183 7 6	Tobacco	144,199 0 0			
	Wine { French				
	— Madeira				
	— Port	7,259 17 5			
	— Spanish				
	— Rhenish				
	Other articles . .	10,489 5 10			
	6 per Cent. . . .	2,120 0 0			
48,540 8 9		409,589 16 2	691,679 15 3		
32,964 8 8		340,560 2 6	573,269 17 10		
29,218 14 8		372,134 9 3	599,270 11 1		
36,907 17 4		374,094 15 11	621,406 14 7		
34,068 16 0		345,318 5 0	573,606 12 0		

40,287	0	9	117,454	15	9
39,620	15	0	226,018	0	2
77,593	3	9	335,509	2	9
52,500	5	0	226,327	6	2
48,461	16	0	208,917	10	0

AN ACCOUNT of the Quantity of the following ARTICLES exported from IRELAND to all Parts, distinguishing GREAT BRITAIN and her Dependencies from foreign Countries, in the Period of the Four Years preceding the War and of the Four last Years of the War.

FOUR YEARS PRECEDING THE WAR.				FOUR LAST YEARS OF THE WAR.			
	Great Britain and her Dependencies.	Foreign Parts.	Total.		Great Britain and her Dependencies.	Foreign Parts.	Total.
Bacon, Flitch	42,557	8,932	51,489	Bacon, Flitch	83,449	29	83,478
Beef, Barrel	91,803	31,179	122,982	Beef, Barrel	112,397	3,912	116,309
Butter, Cwt.	236,980	71,854	308,834	Butter, Cwt.	263,878	44,786	308,664
Pork, Barrel	81,814	10,404	92,218	Pork, Barrel	132,946	9,131	142,077

ANNUAL Medium of the Number of BLACK CATTLE, and of SHEEP and LAMBS, sold at Smith-field-Market, in the Four Years preceding 1771, and the Four Years preceding 1799.

	Black Cattle	Sheep & Lambs
Annual Medium of the Four Years preceding 1771	85,682	664,135
Ditto Four Years preceding 1799	105,539	813,239
Average Annual Increase in Favour of the latter Period	19,857	149,104

No. 8.

AN ACCOUNT of the Quantity of the principal ARTICLES of IRISH Manufactures and Products exported from IRELAND to all parts, on an annual Medium of the Four Years preceding the 25th of March, 1798, distinguishing GREAT BRITAIN and her Dependencies in AMERICA and the WEST INDIES from Foreign Ports.

SPECIES OF GOODS.	To Great Britain	To the British Colonies and Islands in America and West Indies.	Total to Great Britain and the British Dependen- cies.	To the States of America.	To Foreign parts of Europe and Africa.	Total to Fo- reign Parts.	Total to all Parts.
Linen plain, per Yard	33,695,659	1,285,998	34,981,657	4,012,589	891,530	4,904,119	39,885,776
Linen Yarn, per Cwt.	16,876		16,876	3		3	16,879
Corn, Oats, per Quarter	500,273	1,234	501,507		120	120	501,627
Cows and Oxen, per No.	18,110		18,110				18,110
Hides, raw, per No.	47,888	477	48,365		320	320	48,685
Beef, per Barrel	88,544	23,853	112,397	849	2,992	3,841	116,238
Butter, per Cwt.	240,050	23,828	263,878	874	43,241	44,115	307,993
Pork, per Barrel	113,417	19,529	132,946	638	8,493	9,131	142,077
Bacon, per Flich	83,396	53	83,449		29	29	83,478

ANNUAL AVERAGE Value, in Irish Money, in the Three Years preceding the 25th of March 1798, of the IMPORTS into, and EXPORTS from, IRELAND, to and from all Parts, agreeably to the Estimates of the Inspector-General's Books of that Country, distinguishing Great Britain and the British Colonies from other Countries.

IMPORTS.				EXPORTS.			
	British Products and Manufactures.	Foreign Merchandize.			Irish products and Manufactures.	Foreign Merchandize.	
	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
From Great Britain . . .	2,217,425	—	—	To Great Britain . . .	3,861,193	—	—
From British West Indies . .	—	—	—	To British West Indies . .	231,640	—	—
From British Cont. Colonies . .	—	—	—	To British Continent. Colonies . .	38,597	—	—
Total, Gt. Britain & Colonies . .	2,217,425	—	—	Total, Gt. Britain & Colonies . .	4,131,430	—	—
From States of America . . .	—	—	—	To States of America . . .	329,107	—	—
From all other Parts . . .	—	—	—	To all other Parts . . .	182,242	—	—
Total, Foreign Part . . .	—	—	—	Total, Foreign Parts . . .	511,349	—	—
GRAND TOTAL . . .	2,217,425	—	—	GRAND TOTAL . . .	4,642,779	—	—

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

1. **SPEECH** of the Right Hon. *William Pitt*, in the House of Commons, Thursday, January 31st, 1799, on offering to the House the Resolutions which he proposed as the Basis of an *Union* between Great Britain and Ireland. *Seventh Edition.* Price 1s. 1d.

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Elliot (G)

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THE
S P E E C H
OF
L O R D M I N T O,
IN THE HOUSE OF PEERS,
APRIL 11, 1799,
ON A
MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS TO HIS MAJESTY,
TO COMMUNICATE
THE RESOLUTIONS
OF
THE TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,
RESPECTING
AN UNION
BETWEEN
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY JOHN EXSHAW, 98, GRAFTON-STREET
1799.

THE
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OF
NATURAL
HISTORY
OF
THE
CITY
OF
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THE
S P E E C H,

&c. &c.

MY LORDS,

I N yielding to the desire, which it is natural for every publick man to feel, of delivering his sentiments on this great question, it could not be my intention, at any period of the discussion, to exhaust, or even to touch on all the many and various points of this comprehensive subject; and I must be yet less disposed to such an attempt in circumstances so little favourable as the present, I mean, after the talents, the learning and the eloquence of two countries have preceded me, and have, indeed, left little for such as me to glean, even in this vast and fertile field.

A 2

I shall,

I shall, therefore, confine myself within bounds better suited to my own capacity, as well as to the measure of indulgence which I can have any pretensions to expect from your Lordships; and shall content myself with stating as clearly, but as shortly as I am able, a few thoughts on the principal and leading topicks of this argument, especially such as have made the strongest impression on my own judgment, and have had the greatest share in determining the opinion I profess in favour of the proposed measure.

In deliberating on this question, the first proposition which seems to impress itself on every mind, is the convenience, amounting indeed to a necessity, not merely for the advantage and benefit, but for the preservation and security of both countries, that there should subsist between Great Britain and Ireland, a close and intimate connexion of one description or other. The most disadvantageous situation in which either country can be placed, is that of total disconnexion. Indeed when I say disadvantageous, I certainly speak too feebly. I mean that this condition would expose both countries to the greatest quantity and variety of evil, and oppose the most insurmount-

surmountable barriers to national improvement and prosperity of any that can be imagined. Fundamental as this proposition will be found in the argument, it is nevertheless one on which it is unnecessary to dwell long. I find it, in the first place, conceded on all hands, and I think myself entitled to claim on this point a general or rather universal assent. For I presume it will hardly be required of me, that I should condescend to treat as an exception, worthy of notice, the opinions of those who call themselves United Irishmen, or of those other wretched men, whom the vigilance of Government and of Parliament, has lately exposed to the scorn and execration of a country which they disgrace, under the title of United Englishmen. These men may call themselves by what names they please, United Irish, or United English. In my language they can be known only by the appellation of French Irish, French English. They are merely partizans of the ancient and inveterate enemy of their country. They are wedded to the interests of that enemy, and enlisted under his standard. They are confederates in every desperate and wicked project of a foreign state, for the subjugation and ruin of their native land, and their opinions are entitled

precisely

precisely to the same degree of deference, that we should pay to the sentiments or wishes of the French Directory itself, on a question of British interest. I am, indeed, sorry to learn, that these extremes either of delusion or corruption, should exist in a single instance within the limits of this island: but since such men are, I cannot but observe with satisfaction their hostility to every species of connexion between Great Britain and Ireland, and most of all to that best and most perfect connexion which is now in contemplation. For when I learn from France, and her worthy Irish and English associates, that the present Union between England and Scotland stands in the way of their fraternal views towards Great Britain, and that the union with Ireland is a death's blow to their hopes of annihilating the British empire, I cannot but accept this testimony of the enemy, as the strongest and best confirmation of the favour which I profess, towards the measure which they oppose. But I shall not be expected to argue with this kind of adversary. We are engaged with them in a different sort of controversy, and it is the *ultima ratio* alone that can settle the debate between us. With this exception, however, the necessity of connexion is not only admitted,

ted, but warmly asserted by all those who have taken a part in the debate on this question of Union, whether their judgments have been favourable or adverse to the measure; and your Lordships know that there is no description of persons who have been more earnest to disclaim and abjure the character of what is called separatist, than those who have opposed the Union in Ireland, or in this country.

But if it were not admitted, this proposition is too obvious to require much argument to prove it. A glance on the map, and a moment's reflection will satisfy us, that the affairs and interests of these two sister islands are too much the same, in too many points of domestic and foreign concern, not to associate them necessarily in the dangers and business of war, and in the occupations and pursuits of peace. Let us suppose any one brought from another hemisphere, totally unacquainted, not only with the history and concerns, but even with the shape and form of this quarter of the globe, before whom a map of Europe should be laid for the first time; and let such a man be required to conjecture the distribution of
the

the different countries under his eye, into their respective states and governments. Whatever his opinion might be concerning other portions of Europe, I am persuaded we should all anticipate his confident judgment, that the British Isles, at least, formed one state. Let us, in effect, cast our own eye for an instant on this map—we shall see these two islands not merely contiguous, but lying as it were in the very bosom and embraces of each other—we shall observe, not only their mutual vicinity, but their insulation, and their insulation together, from the rest of Europe; we shall see their relative position with regard to each other and to every other part of the world, and especially their reciprocal dependence, for a secure and undisturbed navigation, in a great part of the circumference of both. These and a thousand other obvious particulars, which I do not enumerate merely to avoid abusing your indulgence with considerations familiar to us all, must convince us, that in a state of total political separation, there could hardly be a single transaction, or an instant of their existence, in which these two countries would not be rivals, and if rivals, enemies. It is easy to conceive the enhanced and aggravated state of warfare waged

waged in this manner between countries possessing each, in a greater degree, the means of offence, and in a less degree, those of defence, than in any other possible situation. We shall also recollect, that if one of these countries should be engaged in war with a third, as Great Britain with France, the other would present advantages to the enemy which it could not otherwise possess; and it will not be difficult to foresee, that in a state of separation, the mutual jealousy and habitual animosity likely to prevail between the neighbours, aided by the intrigues and importunity of the enemy, will in all probability draw the neutral island into a direct or indirect participation in these hostilities. Thus will these two countries, instead of contributing to each other's comfort, security and greatness, as they might do under a wiser and happier system, only harass, enfeeble, and endanger each other, just in proportion to their respective means and resources, exhausting their mutual attention and energy, rather in watching and repressing each other, than in repelling common danger, promoting common interests, or exalting their common greatness and glory. Such a condition, in a word, disturbs the tran-

B

quillity

quillity of peace, and shortens its duration, while it multiplies a thousand fold, the perils and evils of war. It is manifest that the smaller and weaker country of the two, must experience these disadvantages yet more sensibly than its powerful neighbour. In its differences with the other, if the aid and alliance of a third power be sought, that service must be purchased by some consideration or other; and we are taught, by reason as well as history the sort of price that is paid by an inferior, for the proud and politic protection of a powerful state. As the comparatively feeble and poor cannot discharge such a debt in positive force and wealth, it must give what it has, and pay its quota in general subserviency, that is to say, in a base and habitual dependence, little short, either in degradation or ruin, of positive subjection. It appears, in fine, to me, that a smaller country, situated between two great rivals, as Ireland is, can hardly hope for an interval of tranquillity, security or dignity. Dignity may at once be put out of the question, for having no real and positive force to support it, such a country must live, from day to day, by intrigue, the most degrading species of policy, and that which it seems the most impossible

possible to reconcile with any sense of national pride or honour. It can as little look for tranquillity or security; for besides its own quarrels, the causes of which are infinitely multiplied, in a separate state, by that very vicinity which might, otherwise, extinguish them; besides, I say, its own quarrels, it will be dragged perpetually into those of both its neighbours, and will indeed generally find itself the bone of contention, to be worried by both, and to endure therefore that double scourge, that complicated desolation and ruin, which fall on those unhappy countries that are themselves the theatre of wars, in which, perhaps, they have no interest, or none other than that of being themselves the prize to be fought for and destined to reward the conqueror, or purchase the peace of the vanquished. We shall perceive, on the other hand, with the same facility and with greater satisfaction, the inducements and advantages of connexion, by which the resources of the one, instead of being to be subtracted from those of the other, flow rather into a general stock, out of which, as from a common heart, strength and prosperity may circulate to the remotest extremities of both, and the right arm of the empire be nourished

and fortified, without impoverishing or withering the left. But I will not insist on this conceded point, and shall assume it as a thing proved for granted, that connexion is necessary for the mutual security and happiness of Great Britain and Ireland.

The question then arises, on the best and most eligible mode, or form of that connexion.

On this point also I have a settled opinion, which I consider as a main and principal hinge of this argument. I wish, indeed, to state and to argue it, in the first instance, as a general proposition, but if it be proved, and made out satisfactorily in that form, it seems decisive on that particular question, and will establish, on principle and reason, the same conclusion, to which our judgment may have been led on more practical grounds. The proposition then is this, that when two countries are so circumstanced as mutually to require connexion, the only mode of connexion which can perfectly remove the evils of separation, and fully confer the benefit of union, is a perfect identity and incorporation of their governments. All other relations of a more partial
and

and imperfect nature, are subject to many inconveniences while they subsist, and are besides of limited duration. By limited, I do not mean merely precarious. I consider their expiration not merely as possible or probable, but as certain ; and besides the perpetual and restless struggles, which are for ever vexing these contentious relations while they last, they appear to me to possess this fundamental and characteristic vice : I mean that of tending gradually, and though perhaps not always rapidly, yet certainly and inevitably, by the very law of their constitution and nature, to a total extinction and dissolution. Nations, then, connected in this manner, will necessarily arrive, at one period or other, at the alternative of separation, towards which they naturally tend, involving, probably, mutual and perpetual hostility, or that perfect incorporation and unity, which is productive not only of all the blessings of internal tranquillity, but of all the advantages, both in strength and prosperity, which flow from the union of their joint resources, and which are encreased, by combination, far beyond the simple addition to their amount.

That such are the properties and defects of
these

these imperfect connexions, we shall easily satisfy ourselves, by a very short and cursory view of one or two of the principal relations of that description, and I shall begin with that which I conceive to stand first, also, in chronological order—I mean conquest. For I believe it will generally be found, when two countries are situated in such a manner as to invite, by their local positions, a connexion between their governments, the stronger of the two, or that which is first enabled by an earlier civilization, and superior population, to aim at foreign enterprise, will attempt the conquest of the other, and if the attempt succeeds, that mode of relation is established between them, which I am now treating of. Conquest may, indeed, in one sense, be understood to express only the means employed for uniting them under one government, or bringing them together, and in that acceptation, conquest may, no doubt, lead to any mode of connexion, and, amongst the rest, may tend at once to that which is the most perfect and the best. Of this, indeed, history will furnish examples, though, I believe, not frequent; for war is but a rough courtship, and violence cannot be expected, in all cases, to procure so happy an union as that which, at once, incorporated the Roman and the Sabine people.

people. At present, however, I use the word conquest to express, not the means or instrument of union, but the relation which is the consequence of victory, and which subsists after it. In other words, I mean that dominion which is exercised by the conqueror on the title of conquest, while the countries continue distinct; or that sovereignty, which being founded by the sword, is measured by the power of enforcing it, on one hand, and the inability to resist, on the other. In comparing, as we are now doing, the advantages and disadvantages of the different kinds of connexion between nations, we may, no doubt, dismiss at once from the argument the consideration of conquest; for I presume we shall agree that this is the worst of all. It is, indeed, the most wretched condition of human slavery. The relation of master and servant, or even of master and slave, amongst individuals, or of sovereign and subject amongst the members of one commonwealth, even under the most despotick forms of government, may be conceived to produce, at least in some instances, or in some degree, a mutual benefit and convenience. But it is not so amongst nations. A master nation will, I think, generally be found a tyrant, and a subject nation is generally a slave. The submission
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and obedience of the one does not purchase protection or kindness, and the authority of the other yields little profit. The dominion of mere conquest, in a word, confers on the sovereign but a barren sceptre and a crown of thorns ; and very fit it should be so. Yet under all these discouragements it will generally be found, that a strong sense of the evils attending separation, stimulated perhaps by that passion, I mean ambition, which seems to actuate all governments, or those who administer them, will induce the stronger power to seek connexion by that course, unless precluded by the establishment of some better or less objectionable mode of relation.

Amongst these I shall next speak of federal connexion, and I am the more inclined to say a few words on that subject, as I have understood that, in the variety of opinions entertained on this question of Union with Ireland, some have been supposed to lean towards a connexion of that nature. I confess, however, that I can find nothing in that mode of relation to recommend it ; and every thing we know of such confederacies seems to prove them, in the first place, inadequate to the purposes of
union,

union, and, in the next place, of very precarious duration. The fundamental vice of these federal constitutions seems to be, that professing to provide only for some common interests, they not only leave, but it is, in some sort, their spirit to establish, a distinctness, and even an opposition of interests on all or many other points. Speaking of national interests, I believe it will be safe to consider distinctness as in general but a convertible term for opposition; and the different parts of a federal union are, I think, generally to be accounted rivals in respect of all in which they are distinct. Their opposition is indeed not limited even by that principle, but extends often to the very *casus fæderis*; I mean to those concerns which are common, and the general interest in which is meant to be provided for by the conditions and obligations of the union. It must be observed by every one who reads the history of such governments, that in the interpretation and performance of their federal engagements, the parties generally act in a spirit of rival and adverse contention. The passions of the multitude seem to flow naturally in that course; and the narrow genius of those who will often have the lead in

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the discordant counsels of such states, seems prone enough to fall in with this popular humour. We shall frequently observe them more occupied in the internal jealousies and competitions of the confederate states, than in promoting the common cause ; and especially in moments of common danger and exertion, they will often discover a greater apprehension of contributing a grain too much in the federal scale, than a grain too little for the success of that object, which is the only rational motive for exertion at all. They are, in a word, more afraid of giving some paltry advantage to a friend and associate, than solicitous to defeat the common enemy, or to provide for common safety. Irrational as this conduct is, I may appeal to observation and history for the existence as well as for the fatal effects of this mania, both in federal governments, and in the looser and yet more temporary and occasional confederacies of mere allies. We have ourselves lived in a very eventful period, and have had but too large an experience in revolutions of every sort. We have, amongst others, witnessed the recent downfall of a great federal government ; I mean the United Provinces : and I certainly agree with what I understood to be the

the sentiment of a noble Lord who opened this discussion on a former day, in thinking that the sudden and rapid overthrow of that government, and the degrading ruin and slavery into which that celebrated people has been plunged almost without a struggle, may be traced to the very vice and defect in the constitution of such governments which I have just described. It is surely reasonable to doubt, whether a more prompt and combined application of the resources which that country possessed, than, it seems, the distinctness and contrariety of its parts admitted of, might not have averted, at least the easy and inglorious conquest of a country, whose accidental and temporary union under the extraordinary talents of the great Prince of Orange, was able first to defy, and then to humble and defeat France, in the plenitude of Louis the Fourteenth's power and greatness. I shall probably not differ with many of your Lordships in ascribing, at least in part, to the same cause, the sudden calamities which have overwhelmed another brave and respectable people, I mean the Swiss cantons, with a rapidity and ease, which can be accounted for only on that principle. And I cannot suppress some apprehension that we may yet have to lament, even in our own day,

the dissolution of the grandest confederacy which the world ever knew, the integrity of which has already been too much broken not to excite anxiety and alarm for the issue, and on the stability of which, however, not only rests the safety and happiness of those extensive territories, and of the many nations which have hitherto found security and shelter under that great union, but I may say, perhaps, on which the independence and liberty of the whole of Europe, and a great proportion of the other three quarters of the globe, may essentially and eventually depend. I speak, my Lords, of the Germanic body itself. But I will dwell no longer on these unpleasant topics, not immediately applicable to the question of the day, and hasten to the consideration of that species of relation which is the proper subject of your present deliberation; I mean that which now subsists between Great Britain and Ireland, and which did subsist between England and Scotland before the Union.

I am to speak now of those connexions which consist in some circumstance of identity, in the municipal constitutions of the two countries; that is to say, in having some
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part or member of their governments the same, with a distinctness and separate independence in all the rest. Such is that of one King or Executive Power, with separate legislatures; and of this particular form of connexion we have undoubtedly had most experience in this empire, and can therefore speak of it with the best information and knowledge. I might, no doubt, safely appeal, at once, to that very experience, for the insufficiency of such a bond, to avoid the evils of distinct existence, or to confer, in peace or war, the full benefits of connexion. But I wish, first, to say a few words to what may be considered as the principle; that is to say, to enquire what are the circumstances from which the evils of these partial relations may be thought to flow; and above all, what is the true cause of that natural and constant tendency in such governments, to weaken and diminish the bonds of connexion, till it becomes little more than nominal, and remains, perhaps, only perceptible in the struggles and convulsions of its dissolution.

The first defect, then, which I remark in this mode of imperfect connexion, is similar, or perhaps I may say, precisely the same, with that
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which I have already observed upon, in relations merely federal. I mean that the connexion being but partial, and intended for partial purposes, the great mass of interests in each nation continue distinct; the attention of each country is still pointed towards a separate view of individual interest; and the public mind, if I may so express it, of the two nations, is kept distinct. I have already observed that distinct interests are generally opposite interests, or felt to be so by the two parties; and speaking of nations, I may add, that distinct minds are generally hostile. In these circumstances, the vicinity, and the connexion of such countries, instead of improving, as they might otherwise do, friendship and harmony between them, seem to produce the very opposite effects, and to cultivate a jealous and angry temper, prone to take offence and umbrage, and ripening every trivial discontent or difference into grounds of permanent alienation and even hostility.

Another grand source of indisposition between such countries, and that from which every one of the evils attending this mode of relation seems to me most immediately to derive, is the inequality in their relative power and influence, occasioned, no doubt, by their
inequality

inequality in real and positive power and influence. It follows necessarily from the very nature and constitution of human affairs, and no artificial or conventional arrangement, no provisions of positive institution can alter it, that in the union of two distinct and unequal countries, the superior must be predominant, and the inferior subordinate in their common concerns, and in the administration of the common parts of their Government. Hence follows, however, a nominal independence in the inferior state, accompanied by a daily and irksome consciousness of real dependence and subordination. It is this contradiction between the real and nominal condition of the inferior country that I consider as the most fruitful source of those evils which afflict such connexions, and ultimately extinguish them. In Governments administered in this manner, under external influence, the eyes of the nation pass over the immediate and domestic instruments of their administration, to that which must appear to them, and may indeed be truly accounted its efficient head, I mean the external power which directs its counsels. It is therefore natural that the grievances, real or imaginary of such a country,

try, should be laid to the account of that higher cause; that its discontents, chagrins, and resentments should be directed against that object; and that the exertions of patriotism, or the struggles of faction, as the case may be, the clamour and the activity, the eloquence and even the virtues of popular leaders and ambitious men, should all aim at that obvious mark. They will find in the people a disposition, founded also in nature, extremely favourable to the success of such aims. I have said that the minds of two countries thus circumstanced are not only distinct, but hostile. Jealousy is the sentiment likely to prevail between them; and indeed where both being nominally, and according to their abstract rights, independent and equal, one of the two exercises, nevertheless, a clear and undisguised ascendancy over the other, jealousy may, in truth, be thought to have no very unreasonable foundation. The prevailing national sentiment, the ruling passion, then, of the inferior country, comes to be an angry, impatient and intolerant love of their independency. Whoever touches that string, reaches their heart, and commands their affections and actions. Hence we shall observe a
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restless and never satisfied struggling with every circumstance either in the constitution of their government, or in the counsels and measures of their administration, which seems, even to the most subtle refinements of jealousy, to affect that object; hence a perpetual straining after its improvement and perfection; and hence also those imprudent, and, surely, ungenerous advantages which are sought, in periods of common distress or danger, to extort concessions favourable to that object; concessions which do not excite gratitude in those who receive them, because they are claimed as rights and seem to have been enforced by necessity; concessions too which seem rather to whet than to satisfy the appetite that calls for them. Each victory of this kind becomes only a vantage ground from whence another may be sought for; and thus each succession of patriots, or of demagogues, seeking to enhance on the exploits of their predecessors, the improvement of independency is pushed forward until the true goal of that course comes in view—I mean separation.

That separation is in truth the goal or winning post of this race of independency, must appear very clearly when we consider what

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the fundamental cause of the subordination complained of is, and what therefore must be the means of reducing it. The ascendancy of the superior country consists, no doubt, in it's superior power, but it is the constitutional connexion that furnishes the channel or organ, through which the power of the superior state is brought home to the inferior country. If they have the same executive power, the influence of the superior state operates through that channel on every branch and department of publick affairs. If their legislatures, distinct in other respects, have one branch or member in common, the legislation of the inferior is bent to uniformity with the other by that power. Connexion then is the means of ascendancy in one, and the cause of subordination in the other, and it is manifest that these grievances can be alleviated, or redressed, only by diminishing or abolishing the cause. That is to say, in other words, that independency can be improved only by striking off, link after link, of the connexion, and it's entire perfection can be attained only by breaking the last thread which holds the countries together.

From this account of the matter it appears unavoidable that the course I have described should

should be pursued in every similar case, and that these events are not to be considered as fortuitous, but as deriving from uniform and pregnant causes likely to produce the same consequences wherever they exist. We are taught, then, not less by reason, than, as we shall soon find, by experience, to expect that the natural and commendable love of independence on one hand, and the incompatibility of that independence with connexion on the other, should always lead two countries thus circumstanced to the last alternative, which I have already more than once alluded to, of separation or union; an alternative in which I am persuaded that true wisdom, and a sincere and genuine love of our country, will always make one choice, while passion and prejudice, especially private passion or prejudice, and while a blind and sophisticated pride, personating, or rather counterfeiting patriotism, may possibly prompt another.

If I have not been deceived by this reasoning, one might almost venture, without much temerity, to trace, as the pretty certain and uniform succession and progress of events, in the history of connexion between two neighbouring countries of unequal power, the

course I have just described. Their connexion will probably begin in conquest—that miserable condition will gradually soften itself into some mode of dependent connexion. This will still be refined into the more flattering condition of nominal independence, accompanied, however, by a real and inherent subordination;—under which the uneasiness of the subordinate country, and its growing pretensions and power, will advance in the progress towards real independence, till it approaches so closely the danger of separation, that both countries will be alarmed, and take shelter from the impending calamity, in the only sanctuary that remains, I mean Union. I will not say that every step in this progress will be the same in all cases. The events, such of them as happen, will probably succeed each other in the same order; but a link or two more may be found in some instances, and a link or two may be omitted in others. I think myself, however, supported not only by such reasoning as I have ventured to lay before you, but by the uniform testimony of history, at least in this observation; I mean that a partial connexion of Government, between two unequal countries, is not a permanent condition

tion in which they can settle, and is incapable of subsisting long without change; that it is not a stationary point, but merely transitory and progressive, and is but a stage or resting place, if that which I have described as constantly progressive can obtain the name of rest at all, between the original state of total disconnexion, from which they started, and either a return to that total separation again, or that which I consider as the more probable term of its Progress, even on the first approach of that evil, but is ultimately certain, I mean perfect and entire consolidation and union.

I profess myself so strongly impressed with this view, I will not say of the philosophical principal, but of history and experience applicable to the subject we are considering, that I cannot help looking to the union of Great Britain and Ireland, not merely as an advantageous and desirable event, and on that account likely to bring itself about, but as certain and unavoidable, although I shall take care not to commit my philosophy too rashly, by assigning any particular period, whether long or short, for the accomplishment of its predictions. I assert only that we are travelling that road. These two countries are visibly approaching each

each other by an irresistible attraction, by a species of gravitation which I consider as an invincible law of political nature, if nature can have such an epithet; and that closing, as it were, by the compulsion of this power, no human obstruction, no counterpoise that can be opposed to it, will long avail to keep them asunder, though it may retard their meeting for a while, I am not less persuaded that when once they are in contact, another principal, equally inherent in that new condition, I mean a principle of inseparable adhesion and tenacity, will hold them together, and will so cement and consolidate their union, as to render all human efforts to separate and tear them again asunder, vain and ineffectual. If these opinions then have any foundation, we may debate here concerning the best means of accelerating this happy and much to be desired event, but we may consider the event itself as predestined; and I cannot help persuading myself that the species of destiny, of which I am here speaking, I mean the steady operation of fixed principles, will work out its own decrees, be the process longer or shorter; and neither that erroneous pride, which is supposed to pervade Ireland in general, nor the love of political monopoly, which may actuate particular classes

classes, or individuals of that country; nor the arts, the seductions, or the arms of the French Republick, can be long interposed between the cause and its effect, or disturb for ever the appointed order of human events, by constraining Great Britain and Ireland to endure the afflictions and calamities of seperation, or of a condition almost equivalent to it, while they contemplate all the blessings of Union placed within their reach, and courting their acceptance.

With this view of the necessity and inevitable nature of this event, the opinion I entertain of its utility is at least consoling to my own mind. Yet I should neither have hazarded such speculations, nor have presumed to detain your Lordships, especially so long, with this sort of reasoning, if I had thought it no better than idle and visionary theory. But, in truth, I was conscious that it was history rather than speculation that I was delivering throughout, and I will venture to say there is hardly a point or turn in this speculative course, which you will not find verified, chapter for chapter, by the history of every connexion we have hitherto known with the nations which now compose our empire.

Your

your Lordships will think me disposed to
 carry you far back, when I venture even to
 name the Saxon heptarchy, and the union of
 those seven independent kingdoms in the reign
 of Egbert. Yet if I do little more than allude
 to that signal event, it is not because I am
 wanting, or that I can think your Lordships
 so, in a due sense of its importance and dignity,
 or of its influence on the subsequent destinies
 either of England or of the world. It is enough
 to say that the union of the heptarchy was the
 birth day of nothing less than this very king-
 dom of England, and that the glorious empire
 which now extends from east to west, and has
 planted the dominion and the language of
 England around the globe, is the lineal descen-
 dant, or rather only the natural growth and
 developement of that event. It is not my in-
 tention, however, to dwell on this antient and
 parent union, for the purpose of illustrating the
 principles of which I have just treated. I am
 sensible that this period is too remote from
 our own, to build any solid conclusion on trans-
 actions, with the details and particulars of
 which we are so little acquainted. I therefore
 mention it only that I may be entitled to read
 a short passage from Mr. Hume's history of

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that period, which, I think, may furnish a reflection or two not impertinent to the present question.

“ The kingdoms of the heptarchy, though
 “ united by so recent a conquest, seemed to be
 “ so strongly cemented into one state under
 “ Egbert; and the inhabitants of the several
 “ provinces had lost all desire of revolting from
 “ that conqueror, or of restoring their indepen-
 “ dent Governments. Their language was every
 “ where nearly the same; their customs, laws,
 “ institutions, civil and religious; and as the
 “ race of their antient Kings was totally ex-
 “ tinct in all their subjected states, the people
 “ readily transferred their allegiance to a Prince
 “ who seemed to merit it, by the splendour of
 “ his victories, the vigour of his administra-
 “ tion, and the superior nobility of his birth.
 “ An union also in government opened to
 “ them the agreeable prospect of future tran-
 “ quillity; and it appeared more probable,
 “ that they would thenceforth become terri-
 “ ble to their neighbours, than be exposed to
 “ their inroads and devastations.” We col-
 lect from this passage, not merely as an opi-
 nion of Mr. Hume’s, but as an historical fact,

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that the local attachment and national feeling which the inhabitants of the several independent kingdoms before their union entertained, no doubt, towards their respective countries, were easily and quickly extended to the whole united kingdom. This change did not even wait for a new generation, but was operated in the very life of the conqueror, and therefore of those who were themselves habituated to the narrower feeling, and who had experienced in their own persons the humiliation and resentment belonging to defeat. For it is also remarkable that the harmonizing property of union was manifested in circumstances the most adverse of any to conciliation, I mean in the case of an union brought about by force, and attended with all the irritation of compulsion and conquest. We must observe, in the next place, that Mr. Hume considers a similarity of language, customs, laws, and institutions, civil and religious, as circumstances, favourable, not only to the establishment of union, but to the improvement and promotion of its beneficial consequences. And lastly, we have the authority of this profound and philosophical historian for thinking that such an union was likely not
only

only to yield the comforts of internal tranquillity and peace, but so to improve the power and resources of the kingdom, as, instead of trembling at the approach of every invader, to render it rather itself an object of terror, or at least, of respect to surrounding nations. It is true that the Danish invasions followed immediately on this event, and we know that the repeated and powerful descents of that warlike nation, not only harrassed and alarmed this island upwards of a century, but at some periods reduced the Saxon power to the greatest possible streights. But in the first place, the Danish invasions were not the consequence of the union of the Heptarchy, and must have happened without it. And in the next place, it is impossible to read the history of that period without perceiving, in every page a demonstration of the salutary effects of that measure, and without ascribing to the union under Egbert, alone, the ultimate preservation of that kingdom. If the Danes had found the island in the same feeble and divided state, in which the Saxons had themselves atchieved the conquest of the Britons; if they had had to contend only with the disjointed, disunited, and single exertions of the seven insignificant

States of the Heptarchy each in its turn, and if those Princes who fought for England had not been enabled by the union to oppose to this powerful and persevering enemy a combined and concerted defence, it is manifest that neither the valour and talents of Egbert, nor the almost romantick endowments and virtues of Alfred the Great, would have availed to prevent a conquest as complete, and an extirpation of the Saxon power and name out of England, as perfect and dreadful as that which they had themselves inflicted on the defenceless and divided Britons. But to pass forward to times somewhat nearer our own, I would now speak of Wales.

Wales had resisted the power of all the Saxon Kings, and the first Princes of the Norman line. It was not till the reign of Henry the Third, and then rather by the effect of internal dissention, than by the arms or enterprize of that Prince, that Wales was brought under a sort of feudal dependance on the Crown of England, and acknowledged the Sovereign of the latter country as a feudal superior. Wales was held, then, during that reign merely as a fief, with the usual acknowledgments,

ments, and under the usual conditions belonging to the feudal relation of seignory and vassalage, but without any claim on the part of England to political sovereignty. This slender relation seems, however, to have improved itself very rapidly into a connexion of a different and much more intimate nature, for in the very next reign, Edward the First, the immediate successor of Henry the Third, was able to convert that feudal seignory into direct and positive sovereignty, and to annex the Principality of Wales inseparably, and as part of the dominion of the Crown, to the throne of England. At the same period, and indeed on that occasion, a partial communication, and but a partial one, of the laws and police of England was made to Wales, by the *Statum Wallie*, as it is called, in the twelfth year of the reign of Edward the First. I mention these particulars only to observe, that at this period commenced an æra of connexion between England and Wales, not indeed precisely the same in all points, but bearing, however, some resemblance and analogy to that which we are principally considering to-day. I mean an imperfect political connexion, which consisted in the two countries being governed by the same Prince,

Prince, with a partial uniformity of laws and institutions, remaining distinct and separate in other respects.

If we would appreciate the value of such a connexion, and its efficacy in producing either internal tranquility or external peace, we have only to pursue the history of that connexion, throughout the whole period of its duration, from the reign of Edward the First to that of Henry the Eighth. It is by no means my intention to interrupt this debate by such a narrative, but merely to direct your Lordship's attention to the result of such an enquiry. For your Lordships know that Wales was not only disquieted within, by the troubles and turbulence of civil disorder, but that both countries were afflicted by a perpetual succession of mutual inroads and petty warfare, not perhaps of sufficient dignity to attract the notice of general history, but sufficient to keep them both exposed to the frequent calamities, and the constant anxiety attending a state of permanent hostility with a neighbouring enemy, and by these means retard and interrupt on both sides of the border, but especially in Wales, the progress of civilization, of arts, of

of industry, of wealth, and, in a word, of public improvement in all its branches. But this was a state of things, which, as I have said, could not last for ever, and the only perfect and sovereign remedy for such disorders, was at length administered in the reign of Harry the Eighth, by that incorporating legislative Union which extinguished in a day the discord of ages, and identified forever these two not only distinct, but hostile nations. In our enquiry then concerning the comparative advantages or disadvantages of these two modes of relation, I mean that imperfect one which proposes to combine connexion with distinctness, and that perfect legislative Union which confounds and incorporates both the nations and their governments, we have only to compare, or rather to contrast, the uneasy and afflicting period which preceded the Union in the reign of Harry the Eighth, with the two centuries of mutual security and peace, and of progressive and still increasing prosperity and happiness, power, splendour and dignity which have succeeded, and as it is reasonable to conclude, have derived in a great degree, if not principally, from that event.

England

England felt very early the advantage of connexion with *Scotland*; and projects for uniting them, even on the best principle of Union, were set on foot, and repeated in various forms, and on the slightest prospects of success, from the earliest period down to the very latest, that is to say, to the actual accomplishment of that salutary design. But such purposes, wise and beneficial as they are, must, it seems, mature themselves in the fullness of time; and although it is ordained that these events shall happen, they must happen, it would seem, in their due and appointed order. It will be found, I believe, that neighbouring nations will seldom begin with union, though they are sure to end with it. The work of connexion commenced, then also, in this case, at the natural beginning of the process, and conquest was resorted to as the instrument of union. This part of the Scotch course, however, was never atchieved. Scotland never was conquered. But the attempt, and all the miseries attending that long and obstinate struggle, deluged both countries in blood, and during more than three centuries afflicted them with calamities, the amount of which, on either side,

historians

historians can hardly report faithfully, without the charge of exaggeration. This sanguinary and ruinous contest terminated in the Union of the Crowns, at the accession of James the first; and here commenced a century of that precise relation which is the subject of our present enquiry. The two kingdoms had one Prince, and one Executive Power, with separate Parliaments. Scotland asserted a perfect independence and equality, but experienced a real subordination. It would, undoubtedly, be unfair, if I were to impute to this cause alone, the many disadvantages under which Scotland appears to have laboured, and the declining condition of that country which is observed by historians during the period I have mentioned. Much of the calamity which fell upon both kingdoms, must be placed to the account of the troubles and civil wars to which every part of the island partook during a great proportion of the last century, and which, amongst other extraordinary events produced, under the Commonwealth, a hasty and short-lived, because ill digested and ill conceived, Union of the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland. But with all these allowances, it is not the less true, that the last

century was a period of great political discord and diffention between England and Scotland, in which the latter country entertained and manifested, as we have been led to expect, that angry and querulous temper which I have described as growing out of the situation, and as inseparable from that jarring and abhorrent union of nominal independence and real subordination. This cause produced its natural effects, and both disturbed the empire in peace, and weakened it in war, sometimes by political contention between the people of Scotland and the Monarch, sometimes by the habitual animosity of the two countries, hardly kept under by the authority or mediation of the common sovereign, sometimes by the intrigues of Scotland with France, and above all by the pursuit of the idol independence, to the very brink of separation. The very unity of the Crowns became a grievance; and your Lordships know, that towards the close of this period, I mean in the first years of the reign of Queen Anne and of the present century, partly by projects for abridging the prerogative, because it was administered out of Scotland, partly by projects for usurping a considerable portion of the regal power, in order that it might

might be administered within Scotland; partly, in fine, by refusing to accede to the settlement of the succession adopted in England, the Parliament of Scotland, the patriots of Scotland, with the acclamation of the whole people of Scotland, brought the danger of impending separation so home to the sense and bosoms of both countries, that their prudence was at length alarmed; they opened their arms to each other, and took shelter from imminent and incurable ruin, in that inseparable embrace which has ever since, and I trust ever will, continue to unite us. It is thus that extremes touch, and thus that these two nations, from the last term of alienation and repugnance, passed at a single step, into the closest and most indissoluble union.

The connexion between England and Ireland began in conquest, and the relation was that of sovereign and subject. I do not say a sovereign able, at all times, to enforce his dominion, or a submissive subject acknowledging and acquiescing under the authority of his master. But whatever connexion subsisted between the two countries, had that origin

gin and preserved that character through its first period. This first and intolerable stage of national relation passed forward, however, and softened itself gradually, but through the sanguinary process of habitual resistance and insubordination, swelling occasionally into civil wars and rebellions of the most ferocious character, into a dependent connexion, or a mitigated but avowed dependence of Ireland on England. I allude now to that period during which the Irish nation, with a parliament of their own, were, however, subject to the legislature of England. I do not speak of the *right*, nor wish to engage in that already obsolete, though recent controversy. I speak only of the *fact*, for such was the constitution, *de facto*, of English and Irish connexion, in the memory of the youngest of your Lordships. This second period, also, passed away, and the present improved state of Irish independence, as it now subsists, was achieved by means, which I have already had occasion to allude to; I mean by the opportune exertion of Irish energy in moments of British debility and distress. For those concessions were certainly granted in circumstances of distress, whether they may now, with better grace, be stated to have

have flowed from the justice and liberal disposition of the conceding country, or not. In the mean while we have arrived, in the due and regular course, at that precise point of connexion, which has been the principal object of discussion. We have a common prince, with separate parliaments. Ireland claims a sovereign independent government, and that claim is freely admitted by our own; while we exercise, nevertheless, with the acquiescence of Ireland, an open ascendancy and controul in every one of its concerns. We are at this moment, therefore, making an experiment, which is not yet twenty years old, of the mutual advantages to be derived from that mode of connexion, of its efficacy in strengthening the empire, in repelling danger from without, in reconciling the minds and affections of the nations within, and, finally, in cementing and perpetuating their union. We must, indeed, regard the present moment as the first, in which the course of events has furnished the proper ordeal of this condition; I mean a crisis of difficulty and danger to the empire; for this is the true touchstone on which the virtue of connexion and of mutual engagements may be proved. Surely, my Lords,

Lords, at this period of the argument, I may claim the benefit of facts, of which we are ourselves the living witnesses, and appeal at once to the disastrous testimony of the present hour, not only for the inadequacy of such a system to yield protection and support in the period of difficulty, but for its active and fatal efficacy in augmenting the danger and hastening the common ruin. Can we need better proof than every tide has of late brought us, that the present feeble and flimsy bond which connects Great Britain with Ireland, does not possess one principle of stability, and has not stamina to resist that innate tendency to decay and dissolution, which accompanies all life from the cradle, whether natural or politick. What result then is it reasonable to look for from this experiment? I should wish to speak on this occasion, not merely with respect, but I must say, with gratitude and reverence, of the conduct held by that which we must call the Irish nation, and which is, indeed, entitled to that appellation. I mean the Irish Government, the Irish Parliament, a great portion of the property of Ireland, of its gentry, and even of its people. In these we have witnessed exertions of courage, activity, perseverance, and spirit,

spirit, as well as of fidelity and honour, in fulfilling the engagements of their connexion with us, and in the protection and defence of their own country, which challenge the thanks of Great Britain, and the approbation of the world. But this sentiment cannot either conceal from us, or disguise other truths, not less obvious, though less grateful and welcome. The loyalty, the prudence, and spirit, which we commend, on one hand, do not, however, prevent an extensive and desperate conspiracy, on the other, against the common safety of Great Britain and Ireland, and aiming, above all, avowedly and distinctly against that connexion, in which the safety of both is felt to reside. After hearing his Majesty's lawful exercise of the powers with which the Constitution of Ireland has invested him, and the legitimate means employed by the Sovereign of that country to preserve a uniformity of measures in the direction of our common interests, treated as the interference of a foreign power, we have the misfortune of seeing at this hour a great portion of the Irish people, considerable for its numbers, and, I fear, not altogether contemptible, even for its blood and talents, in open rebellion against our common Sovereign,

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reign, and in close alliance with our common enemy. The dissolution of all connexion between us is the object they profess. The grievance which they have risen to redress is that connexion; the cause which their manifestos proclaim, the standard under which they muster and fight, is separation. This end then, towards which we have seen such connexions are continually prone, this very separation, which is the natural inborn propensity of imperfect relation, is already, in this case, the subject of a civil war, and is at this moment committed to the issue of arms, which is still depending. I have glanced, in this manner, the history of British and Irish connexion only to shew, that amongst its many other evils, that of tendency to total extinction, which we have been taught by principle, and by the example of other countries, to expect, is proved in fact, and in the actual case, to be one of its properties; and I am hardly apprehensive of a dissenting voice to the conclusion which appears to me to result from this deduction, whether of history or reason, that we have reached the point at which, in the first place, the evils of imperfect connexion are at their height, and in the next, beyond which lies only that alternative,

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so often mentioned, of separation or union. We stand precisely in that predicament, in which the prudence of both countries, and the fidelity and honour of those who are entrusted with their interests, I mean their Governments and Legislatures, are called upon by the most solemn and instant appeal, I mean the peril of their countries, to snatch them from that precipice, on the very edge of which they stand, already wavering, and too giddy to save themselves. It cannot, surely, be a difficult or doubtful question, whether we should fold our arms, and look on upon this danger, and the certain ruin in which it ends, or follow that secure and already trodden path which has already conducted two other countries, now identified with England, I mean Wales and Scotland, to more than safety. We have surely learnt from both those examples, that the measure adopted by them, not only affords a perfect remedy against the evils with which we are now contending, but possesses precisely the opposite property from that which is the character of our present imperfect, ill-constructed connexion; namely, that of tending to a constant and certain improvement and perfection, instead of diminution and

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deterioration of union and all its beneficial fruits.

Having hitherto treated the question somewhat speculatively, I would now speak more particularly to the practical inducements which should recommend this measure to both countries; and, first, to Great Britain.

The advantages to be derived to Great Britain from an incorporating union with Ireland may be divided into positive and negative.

By positive, I mean an accession of real and efficient force to our present Empire, as a naval and military power; for were all cause of difference between the countries extinguished, and were the affections of the whole of Ireland as sincerely directed towards the general service of the Empire, and its force as disposable for that purpose, as may be said of every part of Great Britain, it cannot be doubted that the power and resources of that Empire would receive an essential augmentation and improvement. But I would rather pass on to that class of advantage which I have called negative, and which appears to me the most material of the two.

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By the negative advantage of union, I mean that of avoiding, in moments of war and difficulty, those embarrassments which have never failed to distract and annoy us as often, at least of late years, as war and difficulty have occurred, and which render Ireland, at this moment, instead of a resource, only a dead weight hung round the neck of British exertion, at a time when the full energy of both might be well employed against the common enemy. The case is such, that we have not only to contend with this difficulty in our contest with France, but it must, I think, be an improvident and sanguine view of our own affairs, and of the general events in Europe, to consider even the preservation of Ireland, I mean her preservation to the paternal government of his Majesty, and the continuance of any connexion between us, as a matter which is not become, in some degree or other, problematical and precarious. I would by no means be understood to speak despondently on that subject; I am far from feeling so. I speak only of danger and doubt, as exciting a prudent exertion to counteract them, not of a mean or unprofitable fear. No man in England can repose a more entire confidence in

the vigilance, the skill and the divine valour of the British navy than myself. I profess an equal reliance on the courage and discipline of British troops, endowed as I have always thought them with higher excellence than those of any other nation in the world. I have a firm confidence also in the spirit and bravery of the Irish nation, and in the honour and fidelity of that part of it which professes attachment to our empire, and to our mutual connexion; but with all these grounds of rational hope and expectation, there are two points in which I cannot feel the same implicit confidence, on each of which, however, our ultimate security, and the issue of this contest must depend. I cannot rely confidently on the constancy of fortune in war; nor on the steadiness and uniformity of any national sentiment whatever. I do not know why there is a rebellion in Ireland at all. I have never heard any adequate cause assigned for it. Such pretences as have been resorted to for justifying it, have either been posterior to the events of which they are alleged to have been the causes; or utterly irreconcilable with the avowed objects of the rebellion. Who for example will believe those
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men sincere who would ascribe their insurrection to the religious differences between two sects of christians, while they propose to redress that grievance, by a remedy, the success of which must eradicate from their country, or subject to a furious and fanatic persecution, the profession of christianity itself? I have never, I say, heard any distinct grievance articulated, which would not be enhanced a thousand fold, by the most perfect success that can be proposed in the acknowledged objects of this absurd rebellion. Not knowing then the principle of the present troubles in Ireland, I have no rule for measuring their extent, or for limiting their progress, and I cannot say with confidence, whether any part of the Irish nation, or at least the greater and predominant part, will at some future period even profess adherence to British connexion; neither am I endowed with the means of predicting positively the event of another enterprise against Ireland, if the enemy should attempt it in more favourable circumstances. I repeat it, my Lords, I do not despond on this view of the danger; I say on the contrary that the proper means are sure to repel it. I speak only of the danger as of a motive for exerting

exerting both wisdom and courage in opposing it. In that view I am constrained to acknowledge doubt, and doubt on such a question cannot be divested of anxiety, nor separated from a duty to aim at the attainment of better security for objects of such unappreciable value. I do not say Ireland must be lost if we have not a Union, but I cannot say less than this, that we have no security for the preservation of Ireland, if we do not draw the bonds of our connexion much closer, and that without delay. With such apprehensions it cannot be unseasonable to contemplate a little more closely, the consequences of a total separation from Ireland, and of the necessary attendant, at least, in the present moment, on such a rupture, I mean her immediate alliance with the French Republic. Momentous as these consequences are, I shall pass rapidly over them, because they are too obvious, and their importance too sensible, to require, or, perhaps, admit of amplification.

An Irish democratic republic, or rather anarchy, must be the first and instant consequence of our separation. Let any man, then, attached to the British Constitution; let any one who is
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fond of order and security in society, or even afraid of the extremes of disorder; let any one who would shrink from universal plunder, confiscation and murder, with all the nameless miseries, wretchedness and guilt, which are but the particulars of that aggregate called anarchy; let any man, I say, who has either the slightest concern for the human race and its happiness, a spark of love for his country, or even a common and vulgar solicitude for his own or his childrens' security, reflect for a moment on the triumphant establishment of a democratic anarchy in Ireland. It is not enough to say "*Proximus ardet*;" it is part of our own tenement which is in flames, and we come in absolute contact with this pestilent contagion. Let us, I say, consider soberly, if you please, but deeply and seriously, how much this danger would be increased by such an event, and what the nature of the danger is. I will not insist on this topic; it might lead me too far. But I shall pass to consequences of another sort.

Let us consider, for example, what would be the situation of the western coasts of this island, from the Land's-end to the Hebrides. Let us
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ask Cornwall, Devonshire, Bristol, Wales, Liverpool, Lancashire, Glasgow; let us ask those whose houses now stand on the margin of the Irish Channel, whose lawns and gardens are washed by that sea, which now separates them only from friends; let us ask those manufacturing coasts and counties, and those great trading cities which I have enumerated, and which now draw wealth and profit, without danger, from that channel, what their condition and that of their country will be, when they stand within hail of a powerful and savage enemy, which the darkness of a single night can bring to their chamber doors. At present the British commerce and the British navy pass freely through this channel, with friendly ports and coasts on either side, as if it were an inland navigation; while the ships of the enemy cannot approach, nor entangle themselves either for war or trade, with this maritime pass. But after such a change, when Ireland is hostile, and in the hands of an enemy, let those who direct our naval affairs, and who, I will take this opportunity of saying it, do so with so much honour to themselves, and so much solid advantage, as well as glory, to their country; let

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French, will it be equally impossible to transport troops from France, as when those troops were to fight their way on shore, and the ships, which transported and convoyed them were to fight their way back to France? When a French and Irish army, receiving their orders from the French Directory, are at Belfast, and ready to embark within three hours sail of the British coast, will invasion be as chimerical and visionary as it now is from France to the southern counties of England? Will in fine internal discontent, or speculative error, or the secret machinations of French corruption and English treason, or will popular hope in the first sweets of disorder and anarchy have less, or will they not have much more heart and confidence, when with the example of a successful rebellion, they have also the support of neighbouring armies to encourage them?

These are some, far from all, it would be difficult to enumerate thus suddenly all the consequences of Irish separation from Great Britain, and connexion with France, as it would affect ourselves. I am far from saying, I will never admit that even these accumulated difficulties,

difficulties, would prove too many for the hitherto unmatched powers of British energy or wisdom. But I say the change would be great, the danger as yet untried, and the issue more doubtful than our prudence as Englishmen, and much more, our duty as entrusted with the interests of our country, should permit us to expose it to, if the trial can be averted by any honourable means. It appears to me the greatest peril to which the British Empire, whether we consider its power and greatness without, or its security, freedom, and independence within, ever was or can be exposed. On the question, therefore, as it regards Great Britain, I have no hesitation in assenting to the measure, and concurring in this address.

This consideration might, perhaps, be thought in strictness sufficient for the attention of this Parliament, since the Parliament of Ireland is no doubt competent to deliberate and decide on all that regards the interest of Ireland in this question. No man is less disposed than I am, to controvert the concurrent competence of the Irish Parliament to deliberate, and its exclusive competence to decide

the question as it regards Ireland. I must, nevertheless, think the interest of Ireland in this measure, a very material point in the deliberation of the British Parliament also. For although an entire union with that country appears to be desirable on a separate view of British interest; yet it would, in my opinion, cease to be so, if it were not advantageous to Ireland also. The benefit must be mutual in this mutual transaction, in order to be enjoyed by either. The evils attending separation would not be removed, but on the contrary would in my judgment, be much enhanced, by any measure which should unite us at the expence, or to the essential prejudice of either. If sincere and cordial harmony is not the fruit of union; if identity in constitution is not founded on identity of interest, and is not followed by identity of sentiment and feeling towards the united empire, such an union will not cure the evils of imperfect relation, or even separation, but may bring some of them nearer and more home to both; and will produce but few of those advantages which I consider as the true inducements to that measure. I claim it, therefore, as an English question, to enquire whether Union with Great Britain will

will be beneficial to Ireland; and I should propose to pursue that enquiry not for the purpose of instructing Ireland in her own interests or duties, but for that of informing ourselves of the interest of our own country in this measure, and resting the judgment of the British Parliament, if it should be favourable to it, on the only solid and secure basis, of mutual and reciprocal advantage.

I am, therefore, to consider the consequences which would result to Ireland, from that situation of which I have already described some of the consequences to England; I mean a total separation from Great Britain, and alliance with the French Republic. I have already assumed as the first fruit of this event, or probably as either preceding or accompanying it, the abolition, in all its parts, of the present constitution of Ireland, the zealous attachment to which is opposed to all the advantages of Union, and the establishment on its ruins, of an Irish Republic on the French model. This change and all the complicated calamity it bears *in gremio*, I consider as more fatal than all the rest to the happiness of Ireland; but I will rather postpone its consideration

sideration for a moment, and advert to the other less important, indeed, but yet serious effects of such a revolution. It implies then, in the first place, a state of open hostility to England; and this warfare must in all probability partake of the nature of civil war. For it cannot be imagined, that Ireland should be unanimous in surrendering a free Government and embracing French chains; nor in preferring that abhorred compound of guilt and madness, of infamy and ruin, to the blessings of religion, law, honour, security, and genuine freedom; nor is it imaginable that Ireland will be unanimous in rejecting British connexion for the purpose of fraternizing with France. The event which I have supposed, I have supposed to be the issue of war, in which one party in Ireland, now the strongest, and I trust the most numerous, has been subdued. But submission to force does not change the mind; and were such a calamity to befall Ireland, the new Irish Directory will find that the armies of England, when employed in the rescue of Ireland from that slavery, will be seconded by a great and powerful portion of their subjects. Ireland then is doomed in this event, to foreign and internal war, with all its complicated

complicated miseries, of which the bitterness is indeed, yet on the palate of that unhappy country. I have already spoken of the disadvantages to which even England would be subjected from the hostility of Ireland. It is manifest that the country which is the least powerful on shore, and is null at sea, must labour under the same disadvantage multiplied in an infinite degree. A French army in Ireland is the natural consequence of this state of things: if that army is weak, it cannot protect them; if it is strong and adequate to the objects of France in sending it, as assuredly it will be. Ireland becomes a miserable province of France. But Ireland as a separate state, must alone provide for all the imperial establishments to which she now contributes but a part. Ireland must have an army all her own, and she will find she must subsidize her allied army, not by treaty only, but by requisition and contribution, and every other form of exaction and extortion, limited by the modesty of the French Directors, their Generals, and all their subordinate officers of plunder. They must have fortified towns, and all the establishments of that costly branch of defence. They must have a navy, build ships, maintain
arsenals

arsenals and dock-yards, supply their navy with stores and provisions, and they must man and pay their fleets, all from their own funds and resources. Have the economists of Ireland computed the price of these imperial honours, if indeed, they can be borne at all? But let them consider, whether the insulated trade and wealth of Ireland will furnish either men or money for such demands; even after the people should have so far belied all the experience which the world has had of them, by submitting with perfect obedience to the utmost exactions that can be laid upon them. It would after all be worthy of a moment's reflexion, whether if Ireland should not suddenly accomplish that which France, Spain, and Holland, seconded by an armed neutrality of the maritime powers of the North; that is to say, what the whole naval world have tried in vain, I mean should not suddenly acquire a superiority at sea over Great Britain, whether her commerce and every hope which her insular situation could suggest or realize, must not be held by sufferance, and at the mercy of that powerful and offended neighbour, to whom nature had allied her, but whose generous offer of an equal and honourable participation

pation in power, prosperity and happiness she had rejected with insult, as if it had been an injury. Ireland will, no doubt, not expect after her separation from England, and alliance with our enemies, to partake freely in our East India or our colonial trade; nor will she expect of England in those circumstances, the great and liberal sacrifices which she now makes to the support and promotion of Irish industry, with the amount and particulars of which a noble Lord has just made us acquainted; sacrifices which, however liberal in their extent, and however beneficial to Ireland in their effect, I consider only as a natural indulgence of fraternal affection, as well as a wise exertion of imperial policy, while we are united; but which must of necessity expire with our connexion. Will the trade of France, or the share of it to which they would be admitted, and the conditions of its tenure, compensate this loss? Will restraints and prohibitions on the commercial intercourse between England and Ireland be no loss to the latter country? The papers on your Lordships' table will instruct us on that point.

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The considerations which I have already enumerated are of no light or trivial import; but I must now set before the eyes of Irish gentlemen, one inseparable consequence of such a revolution, and one of which they are no doubt aware. I mean the expulsion and confiscation, not to say the blood of those who now support their antient connexion with England; and whom the case I have stated supposes to have been defeated. But will confiscation and murder go no deeper even than this? In the savage triumph of democratical anarchy, will not every friend to the established constitution of Ireland, to the authority of law, or even to the moral restraints of virtue and religion, will not every one who is guilty of that unpardonable irremissible crime, the possession of property, real or personal, great or small, will not in a word all those whose situation seems to offer either a lure, or a curb to violence, be involved in that undistinguishing massacre and pillage which sweeps the way before and bears up the train of such revolutions? I must indeed put it, my Lords, seriously and earnestly, not as a topic of declamation, or false and artificial feeling, but as furnishing

nishing the soundest argument, and exciting the warmest solicitude, to the property, and I may say to the industry, and to the virtue of Ireland, without distinction of degree, or of religious persuasion, what would be the consequence of a complete victory obtained by France in Ireland, what would be the inevitable consequence of delivering Ireland, with all her political, religious and civil interests, over to the discretion of that description of Irishmen who would then become their masters, and of that description of anarchy which must follow such events as I have described. I choose rather to hint at than to dwell on such topics. They are indeed fitter for the private meditation of those who are concerned in them, than for a public discussion or rhetorical amplification. I am content with having stated shortly and dispassionately the nature and degree of some of those dangers which may induce England to consent to Union, but which seem to command Ireland, with the authority of urgent and instant necessity, to seek without delay, the refuge which this measure presents to her.

It is impossible to overlook some circumstances in the internal and political condition of Ireland, which bear as powerfully on the question of Union, and seem to recommend that measure to the people of Ireland, as strongly for the purposes of equal government, and of civil and municipal happiness, as on any other grounds whatever. Ireland is a divided country, but unequally divided as to property and numbers; the least numerous class possessing the property and the power; but the most numerous entertaining, and indeed cherishing fondly, and tenaciously, claims on both, I mean both on the property and the power. I need not detain your Lordships by describing the extent or the violence of those passions which inflame and exasperate both parts of the Irish nation against each other. Every one knows the firm and immovable basis on which their mutual hatred stands, the irreconcilable nature of its motives, its bitter, malignant, and implacable character. In this frame and temper of mind, however, towards each other, one of these portions of Ireland claims and exercises what is felt by both, to be a species of dominion over the other.

other. I believe it is hardly too much to say, that there are two nations in Ireland; two Irish peoples; the one sovereign, the other subject. The sovereign class, or cast of Irishmen, claim their sovereignty as of right, and ground it on an old title of conquest, confirmed, as they contend, by possession, acquiescence, and prescription. They claim also the federal support of Great Britain in maintaining this dominion, on the solemn grounds of fidelity to implied compact, compensation for sacrifices, and reward for services. They shew a close alliance and identity of views between themselves and the English interest in Ireland in all times, and they rely as strongly on recent, and even on present exertions in a common cause, as on the uniform tenour of their ancient services. In a word, they call at once upon our honour and our gratitude, and they support that appeal by a stream and series of facts which we cannot controvert. I must confess that I have always felt this point as constituting a true and proper dilemma—on the one hand, I cannot admit the ascendancy of one part of a nation, over another part of the same nation, to the extent and to the purpose claimed in Ireland, as capable of assuming

assuming any character deserving the denomi-
 nation of right. That which is a wrong on
 one side, cannot, intelligibly to me, become a
 right in the other. Wrong is not a material
 out of which it appears possible to construct
 right; and I do not think the virtues of pos-
 session, prescription, or any other limitation
 of time, which are supposed to cure the vices
 of a bad title, at all applicable to the case of
 perpetually subsisting, and, as it were, reno-
 vating wrongs, especially such as affect the
 political rights of great numbers of men. The
 operation of prescription in confirming titles,
 even in the private transactions of property,
 is, indeed, different, I believe, from the com-
 mon notion that is formed of it. Prescription
 does not cure the original vice of a bad title;
 but, after all memory of the good title, which
 had been supplanted by the usurped one, has
 been lost and buried under the oblivion of
 time, prescription, that is to say, the lapse
 of time within which legal memory can sur-
 vive, determines the expiration of the old ti-
 tle and gives effect, not to the bad one which
 first superseded it, but to a new title arising
 out of possession, and consummated in this
 manner by the completion of prescriptive time.

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Nothing of this applies to subsisting and continuing wrongs, in which the length of their duration, and the frequency of their repetition, instead of diminishing the injury, must be felt to be a grievous aggravation, and instead of converting wrong into right, seems only to improve and fortify the title of those who suffer, to shake off the injury on the first opportunity that offers. If possession then will not constitute this singular right which is claimed in wrong, as between the parties themselves, neither can it be improved by the interests, the engagements, or the obligations of a third party: and I do not see how the *jus tertii*, as it may be called, of England, can affect the relative claims of these two Irish nations, or of these two parts of the Irish nation. On this ground, therefore, and merely on this general and abstract view of the question, I confess I might have thought it difficult to assign a sufficient reason to preclude his Majesty as Sovereign of Ireland, from concurring with his Irish Parliament, or even from exerting, in every lawful way, his legitimate powers in promoting such measures as might be calculated to place every class of his Irish subjects on an equal footing, as to civil rights,

rights, and consolidate these two hostile nations into one peaceable and united family.— But in truth your Lordships know that nothing can be less rational, nor more dangerous, and often fatal than these abstract views of practical questions, affecting the interests of multitudes and of nations. In the blind pursuit of abstract right, we shall often find ourselves, innocently no doubt, if our intention be considered, but yet too effectually, the instruments of great practical injustice and oppression. I believe there are few cases to which this observation applies more closely, than to that which we are considering.—That part of Ireland which we would wish to redress, claim not only political equality in the Government of their country, a claim in which I confess I cannot help sympathizing with them; but they are known to entertain, and to nourish yet more fondly and anxiously, though perhaps not yet so loudly or distinctly pronounced, claims of a very different nature. We cannot be ignorant that the first application of those rights with which we should be disposed to invest them, is likely to be the perpetration of a great wrong, and that at bottom, that wrong was, perhaps, the true and eventual object of their

their actual demand, and would be the practical result of its attainment. The Catholics of Ireland not only claim a participation in the civil franchises enjoyed by their Protestant countrymen; but they foster claims on the *property* of Protestants, the present possession of which they treat as mere usurpation, and these claims are of no trifling extent. We know the aspiring character of their church, or if you please, of all churches, or of all bodies and descriptions of men. We must, above all, recollect what is perhaps more urgent than all the rest, that the Catholics, besides their claims, civil or religious, have passions to gratify, passions long irritated, long restrained, but not on that account the less vehement, or dangerous. I have heard such apprehensions treated lightly, as the productions either of imagination or ignorance; and I certainly pretend to no credit on such points, from personal knowledge or inquiry. I should wish therefore to qualify any thing that may appear rash or peremptory, in what I hazard on such a subject, by avowing that degree of diffidence in my own views, which may be thought becoming with regard to facts, which though attested, I think, satisfactorily by others, have

not fallen under my own observation. But with this qualification, I confess that I find it difficult to resist a conclusion to which the general knowledge we may all possess of the human character, applied to such facts as all admit, seems to lead us. I must therefore profess a strong impression, that if to the physical force already possessed by the Catholic body, and which consists in superiority of numbers, were added by any such revolution as that which we are considering, the advantages of political power, and the weight and influence which belong to the authority of Government and Legislation, some danger might accrue to the property, the establishment, and even the personal security of the Protestant in Ireland; and with this apprehension on our own minds, the alarm expressed by those who are so deeply interested in the consequences of such measures, seems entitled to our serious and earnest attention.

I am not more clear, therefore, in thinking the Catholics entitled to a fair participation in the civil and political franchises of Irishmen, than I am in feeling, that the Protestants ought

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to be protected and defended in the security of their property, their religion, and their persons, against every violence which the Catholics might be disposed to attempt, when they have passed from their present state of subjection to that of authority and power. The dilemma, therefore, has hitherto consisted in this. The Protestants could not be supported in that ascendancy which seems necessary even for their protection, without derogating from what may appear to be a natural right of the Catholics. The Catholics could not be supported in their claim of equality, without transferring to them that ascendancy which equality of rights must draw to the larger body, and which from that moment must expose the Protestants to dangers from which they ought to be protected. Such seem to be the practical difficulties in the way of abstract justice, while the Government of Ireland continues merely local. An Irish Parliament, in which the ascendancy is either Protestant or Catholic, and it cannot choose, but lie on one side or the other, may be expected still, I fear, to gore and lacerate their country, by one or other of the horns of this dilemma; and I see no perfect remedy for Irish division,

and its lamentable consequences, while these two enraged and implacable opponents are still shut up together, are still enclosed within the very theatre, on the very arena of their ancient and furious contention. I do sincerely think that this divided and double condition of the Irish people requires something of an *imperial aula*, a legislature founded on a broader and more liberal basis, to administer impartial laws to all, and to reconcile security with justice. While one of these parties must judge the other, in which ever hand the fasces may be placed, I fear there is reason to expect only violence in the suit, and if not injustice, at least slow and imperfect justice in the decree. My mind, I confess, cannot resist the conviction arising out of all these considerations, that the united Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, will in the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, constitute a better legislature, and a more perfect, because a more impartial Parliament, for all Ireland, than any representation of a minor part or section of Ireland, in a separate, local Parliament ever can. I am persuaded that laws beneficial to the mass of the people of Ireland, and promoting its general prosperity and happiness

piness, may be expected with greater confidence from the united Parliament, in which local partialities, interests, and passions, will not divert the straight and equal current of legislation, than in an Irish Parliament, where these stumbling blocks must for ever bend or impede its course. In the united Parliament right may be done unaccompanied by wrong. Irish Catholics may be invested with their political capacities, without the slightest danger to Protestant establishment or property. These, on the contrary, must acquire a tenfold and hundredfold security in the Protestant Parliament, and the genuine Protestant ascendancy of the united kingdom—The Protestant church and property may, on the other hand, be secured, without perpetuating the present humiliating and degrading exclusion of the Catholic part of the Irish nation. Such are some of the particularities in the condition of Ireland, which appear to me to add in her case, many powerful inducements to those which in every other instance may invite neighbouring and friendly countries to a close and intimate union of their governments.

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I confess, that to me these considerations furnish, by no means the weakest recommendation of this measure. I look with peculiar satisfaction towards the prospect which it seems to open, I think in truth, for the first time in the history of Ireland, of doing justice to one part of that nation without injury to the other, and of providing for the general prosperity and happiness, without bringing calamity on any particular part. For I cannot consider the admission of fellow citizens to a participation of common franchises, as an injury to those who happen already to possess them; nor the loss or even destitution of partial and exclusive dominion over fellow subjects, as any wrong. The Protestants have a sacred right to their properties, to their religion and to their own liberties; but the liberties of their Catholic brethren are no part of that property; they have no narrow corporate right, or none that I can wish to support them in, in the government of their countrymen; nor can I see that the subjection of the Catholics must be an article in the charter of Protestant liberties.

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If the Union, therefore, present a hope of meliorating the condition, and extinguishing the discontents of a great majority of the inhabitants of Ireland, without exposing the rest to danger, but on the contrary, adding the most substantial securities to all their legitimate rights, I must profess myself on that account, and perhaps, I may say, principally on that account, a warm friend to the measure; and I am free to confess that if these were not to be the consequences, I should expect very little advantage from it. I am desirous, therefore, of declaring for myself, that I shall think the Union much more perfect, much better adapted to all its beneficial ends, and the benefits to be expected from it, in such a case, I think incalculable, if the just claims of the Catholic Irish are provided for by an explicit article of the treaty itself. After having thus declared my own mind, and distinctly pronounced my own judgment on this great leading point, I think it right to add, that if any political peculiarities of the present time, should render it impracticable to engross these wholesome provisions in the written treaty itself, I would rather restrain my wishes for the

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immediate accomplishment of this desirable end, than expose this great transaction to needless and unprofitable hazard, by unseasonable pertinacity or impatience. And I should still look with confidence to a period when the object I have mentioned will result as a natural consequence, from the treaty, and when this desirable change will flow, with many other blessings, from the impartiality of the imperial and united legislature—If I were worthy then of offering to the loyal Catholics of Ireland the advice of an individual, who has no other claim to their attention, than that of uniting a spirit of liberal toleration, and a strong favour towards common right as opposed to monopoly, of combining, I say, these sentiments with something of a practicable disposition which would not reject attainable good when a more perfect accomplishment of right is out of reach, I would implore their prudent acquiescence in a measure which must ultimately consolidate their interests with those of their country; which will bring, in its season, relief to the Catholics and security to the Protestants of Ireland; which will improve the wealth, the prosperity,

prosperity, the dignity, the manners, and the public and private happiness of their country; and which conferring these blessings with one hand, will avert with the other, the certain ruin, desolation and slavery, which are at this moment impending over their native land.

I wish to guard against one misinterpretation. When I prefer the United Parliament to that of Ireland, as at present constituted, I should be much misunderstood, if I were thought to profess a distrust of the wisdom and justice of the Irish Parliament in general, or to impute to it the slightest degree of incompetence to the general objects of its legislative duties. I profess, on the contrary, the highest and most unfeigned respect, both for the Irish Parliament as a body, and for many of its members, with whom I have, indeed, little, or I might nearly say, no personal acquaintance, but whose characters and talents, as public men, I have contemplated, as others do, with the respect and admiration they justly inspire. What I have hazarded on this subject, the delicacy of which I am not insensible to, amounts only to this; that in one great branch and member of Irish affairs, the pre-

sent Irish Parliament must be considered as a party, and in those concerns, a major part of the people must now receive the law from an adverse and rival authority. Whereas, in the United Parliament, the Irish members will furnish all the local information, and will possess all the weight and influence, which the general affairs and interests of that country require; while those local or partial feelings which might warp the judgment of the best intentioned Irishmen, on some subjects, might be moderated, and tempered, by the mediating impartiality of the imperial Parliament.

I would now consider one or two general objections, which I have observed to be most prominent in the opposition to this measure, and I shall begin with that which appears to have been the most operative and successful throughout Ireland, and to have had the greatest share in the rejection of this important and salutary proposal. I mean the notion, that a Legislative Union, however beneficial in its effect, to the interests of Ireland, is, however, in some way, derogatory to the honour, and national independance of that country.

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The whole of this topic will be found to be an appeal from reason to feeling, and, indeed, from a just and genuine feeling to a blind and inconsiderate one. It is intended, like most of the objections on this question, to preclude the discussion of its merits; and what is peculiar to this particular objection, it is not only intended to elude the merits of the principal question, but seems to disclaim the discussion even of any proper and specific merits of its own. It is used, in truth, to disqualify those to whom it is presented for all deliberation whatever, by exciting the passions, and interposing the flame and dazzle of enthusiasm, between the eye and the object it is to examine. Those who employ this topic, have undoubtedly a considerable advantage; for, in the first place, many more are susceptible of strong and lively feeling, than capable, or willing, to form an enlightened and deliberate judgment on any subject whatever. In the next place, the feeling applied to, is in itself by no means unnatural, and so far from being culpable, or a subject of reproach, must, on the contrary, be classed with those affections which are the most beneficial to the world,

and the most honourable to those who possess them. It is, in a word, a branch or mode of patriotism, that virtue which embraces the whole range of our public duties, and which is an object of too much respect and veneration, when genuine and well directed, not to challenge some indulgence even in its errors and delusions. I cannot, however, help suspecting, that those who avoid discussion, are not very firm or confident on the merits; and that passion is seldom exclusively applied to, when reason is on the same side. Enthusiasm is, indeed, in general, to be accounted but an unsafe and unfaithful guide. The guide is himself blind, and I know not how to search for truth with better hope of success, than by the light of such reason as Providence may have bestowed upon us. I should propose, therefore, to follow that course, and to consider dispassionately, even this passion. I would fairly and deliberately enquire, whether a sincere regard for the national dignity of Ireland, does, indeed, oppose any solid objection to a Legislative Union with Great Britain.

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I shall waste but little of your Lordships' time, in analyzing the nature and foundation of those local affections towards particular spots, which seem to circumscribe the general benevolence of mankind within the rivers or seas, or mountains, which encompass that which we call our country. Perhaps that expansive love of our fellow creatures, which has obtained the general name of philanthropy, may have been compressed into narrower bounds, in order to augment its energy in the proper scene of its exertion; perhaps this large and diffuse motive may have been drawn home as it were, and retrenched within limits more commensurate with the size and sphere of human action. But no matter how or why, the love of our country certainly exists; it is the noblest affection of the human breast; and I have no doubt is of divine origin—I am to acknowledge that Ireland, both by its dimensions, its local position, and every other circumstance attending it, offers a fit object for that passion, the ardour of which may well be improved into enthusiasm and zeal, by the many natural charms which, I understand, abound in that country, and by that to which

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I can, indeed, speak myself, I mean the many generous qualities which distinguish its inhabitants, and seem to endear that nation to those who compose it—I am willing also to admit, that besides that solicitude for the happiness and well-being of the people who inhabit our country, which is the proper and distinctive feature by which true patriotism is to be recognized, this local affection may also attach a sort of interest, and a certain importance and value, to the separate political existence, or individuality, of that country. That identical space has contained the habitual objects of our regard, and an association may have been established between our local and moral attachment, in such a manner as to render it, perhaps, no easy abstraction, to love the people of Ireland, distinctly from that which may be called the love of Ireland. Nothing of all this need be controverted; nor is it desirable that it should be otherwise—I would only demand a similar assent to some particularities, which I think observable in this passion, and which appear to me to bear, in some degree, on the principal question. This local patriotism, then, seems to be limit-

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ed not only by space, as we have seen, but also with some reference to time. The space to which the affection of patriotism attaches, is that which we have been accustomed to consider as our country, at a given time, that is to say, in our own time, or during our own generation. If it had been larger or smaller at our birth, our love would have expanded or contracted itself accordingly. We have seen a remarkable instance of this expansive property in local patriotism, or in this love of metes and bounds, as related by Mr. Hume, in the passage which I have read from his history of the Union of the Heptarchy. We have seen in that example, the inhabitants of the six conquered kingdoms transfer their allegiance to Egbert, and the minute partialities of these six countries, transgress their respective bounds, and in obedience to events, dilate, as by common consent, so as to occupy the whole surface of the united kingdom of England, and accommodate themselves to this change of boundary, with as much rapidity and ease, as the ambition of the Monarch himself had done to the growth of his dominions. This happened in the very season of
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repugnance and disgust which succeeds to conquest, and a vanquished Mercian or East Angle, ceased even in his own life, to think himself degraded by being called an Englishman.

The same truth has been evinced in Wales. Those who inhabited that principality in the early part of the reign of Harry the 8th, felt their patriotism and national feelings bounded by the mountains of their country, beyond which, indeed, so far from discovering the objects of affection, they found only those of antient animosity and habitual hostility. The same narrow bounds, however, no longer limit the public spirit and affections of those who have inhabited that part of our island since that memorable and fortunate æra in the history of Wales. I believe I may venture to say, that none of your Lordships who may have an interest in that country, and that no Welch gentleman, or inhabitant of Wales, would thank a Welch patriot who should propose to restore the dignity and independence of that country, by separating it once more from England; that is to say, who should

should forbid and prohibit every Welchman, from presuming to consider himself as entitled to any participation in the affairs, in the enterprises, in the greatness, consideration, or glory of that empire, of which his country is now a distinguished member. They would, no doubt, think the dignity of their countrymen strangely provided for by this second extermination; by driving them once more out of England, and cooping them up within the mountains of Wales, as the Saxon Conquerors had done by their British ancestors. I shall not easily persuade myself, that a Welch gentleman will think an affront or indignity is put upon himself, or his country, because Lord NELSON, for example, can take him by the hand as fellow-subject; or because his countryman *FOLEY was enabled, by the union of Wales, to lead the British fleet into action on the 1st of August, instead of heading some miserable predatory inroad across the Welch marches.

I may speak with better authority of another country. Those who inhabited Scotland in the reign of King William; those who

* Captain Foley, of his Majesty's ship Goliath.

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inhabited that part of Scotland with which I am best acquainted, and who looked from their windows on the hills of Northumberland, at a few miles distance, had their patriotism bounded by their horizon, or rather their eye had a wider range than this large and liberal passion. It is not so with those who inhabit that country in the reign of George the Third, and this change, I am persuaded, was operated much sooner than some Noble Lords seem disposed to allow. A Noble Lord, (Lord Holland,) referred, on a former occasion, to a proceeding of this House in the year 1713, as furnishing some ground to suppose that the two countries were not soon reconciled to the Union. I am by no means disposed to deny, that the transaction alluded to, might furnish a very fair argument to be used in debate on this topic. It certainly imported, in its literal acceptation, the wish, at least of some individuals, for a dissolution of the Union, being an express motion for that purpose. It was negatived, indeed, by the House; but it was made by one of the sixteen Scotch Peers, and supported, generally, though I do not know that it was unanimously, by that body. I have

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no reason to complain, therefore, of this proceeding being used in argument, to the point for which it was adduced ; but I must say, at the same time, that it does not appear to me as conclusive, as I am to presume it did to that Noble Lord. Your Lordships' leisure will not admit of my entering minutely into all the particulars of this proceeding ; but I must at least say, that it has by no means made the same impression on my mind, and I am not satisfied, that the people of Scotland or of England, or the Peerage of Scotland at large, or their representatives in this House who supported this motion, including even the mover of the question himself, were in earnest in desiring the separation of the united kingdoms. I do not think myself bound to believe merely on the letter of a motion in Parliament, any body of men, and especially that enlightened body to which I allude, capable of harbouring a design so absurd, and if sincere, so wicked and detestable, as that motion imported, while I can find any other motive, or can imagine any other object more rational and less culpable, to account sufficiently for the proceeding. I find then, no difficulty in dis-

covering abundant inducements for this motion, short of the absurd and incredible purpose which it expresses—I observe, in the first place, that it was made in the House of Lords, and originated with the sixteen Peers of Scotland. The Scotch Peerage was undoubtedly the body whose interests were least consulted, and who were the worst treated by the Union. But they had received fresh cause of complaint subsequent to that event. The abolition of the Privy Council of Scotland was, in my opinion, necessary to consolidate the Union, by removing that remaining nucleus of a local government, and separate interest. But this measure affected, no doubt, the views both of ambition and of vanity, of the Scotch Peerage and of the higher order of the gentry, though it very little concerned the people. The discontent of the Peerage excited by that measure, had been yet more recently enflamed by the decision of this House in the case of the Duke of Hamilton. His patent, as Duke of Brandon, had been disallowed, and by that proceeding it seemed decided, that a Scotch Peer, after the Union, should be incapable of receiving the independent dignity of a British Peerage ;

Peerage; a disability highly injurious to the
 Peerage of Scotland, in its fondest aim, and
 reasonably offensive and disgusting to that
 body, already sore with prior provocations. If
 we consider this motion, then, as no more than
 the expression of the chagrin of this body; but
 especially if it be considered as a means em-
 ployed to give weight in future to their just
 pretensions, we shall assign as weighty a mo-
 tive for such a proceeding as has produced
 many others of great importance in Parlia-
 ment. These grievances were, indeed, ex-
 pressly stated in the motion, amongst the rea-
 sons on which it was grounded. But the
 special occasion of this transaction was the ex-
 tension of the malt-tax to Scotland. This tax
 was, in fact, felt to be oppressive on that
 country, and it was, besides, fairly questiona-
 ble whether the imposition of this tax at that
 particular point of time was not contrary to an
 article of the Union. This objection applied
 indeed only to that particular period, and
 ceased afterwards; but it was subject to ques-
 tion at the time. I think on the whole that
 the Scotch members of both Houses were
 justified in standing out on this tax, and I
 think their Union and exertion on that occa-
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sion did them honour, though I do not think
 the mode of opposition they chose judicious.
 I find, however, in the very occasion which
 gave rise to this proceeding, a sufficient mo-
 tive, and a much more natural and indeed
 justifiable purpose than that which the motion
 literally imported. It was intended to enforce
 the opposition of Scotland to the malt-tax,
 and to coerce the Minister on that point, not
 by the dissolution of the Union, but by the
 intimidation which the very menace of such
 a fatal step might be expected to produce.
 The English Peers who supported this mo-
 tion had themselves been the authors and
 promoters of the Union. But they were the
 opposition of the day, and it appears, could
 not deny themselves the satisfaction of using
 the opportunity which this Scotch question of
 the malt-tax afforded them, of distressing the
 Minister of the day, by the singular and rare
 union of the Representatives of Scotland, even
 for a few hours, against the Court. It lasted,
 indeed, no longer; and the opposition of the
 sixteen Peers seems to have spent and ex-
 hausted itself in this single act, in which I can
 discern only a general expression of their own
 particular disgust, and a wish to stand well

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with their country by opposing the malt-tax. The opposition to that tax, and the attempt at least to modify it, as to Scotland, was the true occasion of this motion, and instead of so absurd and flagitious, but so important and momentous a design as that of dissolving the Union, there appears to me to have been nothing deeper in the matter, than the wish on one hand to tease a Minister, and on the other to obtain the reduction of threepence on the bushel of malt, in a tax upon Scotland. I am a good deal confirmed in this view of the transaction, by observing that although this tax was renewed every year, and was objected to by the Scotch members in the House of Commons, I do not find a hint of any new intention to dissolve the Union. Various other questions interesting to Scotland were discussed, without producing the slightest intimation of such a design; and I find one, very little posterior to that on which the noble Lord has relied, so remarkable, that I cannot help mentioning it; I mean the extraordinary bill, known by the name of the Peerage Bill, which actually passed this House in the year 1719, but was thrown out, as might be expected, in the House of Commons.

Neither

Neither the Peerage of Scotland, nor the Scotch nation, have ever received, since the Union, so signal a provocation as that bill appears to me to have offered to them. It proposed, in direct terms, the complete disfranchisement of the whole body of the Scotch Peers, and stripped them even of the elective franchise which the Union had left them, without any other compensation worthy of notice, than that of seeing such of their representatives as were parties to this spoliation, rewarded by British Peerages, which were to make them independent in future, of the favour, or resentment of their injured constituents. This measure, as your Lordships must see, was, at the same time, the most flagrant violation of the Union in some of its most fundamental articles, and could not fail of exciting general disgust and alarm throughout Scotland, by breaking so wantonly the integrity, and shaking the security of that solemn treaty. The Bill was accordingly debated with great warmth, at great length, and, I think, with much ability in both Houses of Parliament; and I have troubled your Lordships with these particulars, for the purpose of observing, that throughout these debates, on a subject sufficiently

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ently offensive and irritating to Scotland, there
was not dropped from the lips of a single in-
dividual, an intimation of any such wish for
separation, as had been expressed in the pro-
ceeding of the year 1713. A certain proof
that such a wish could not be general in either
country, and a pretty conclusive argument that
it was not professed or entertained by any con-
siderable party or description of men then
known in England or Scotland. On this re-
view of the period immediately succeeding the
Union, I might, without much prejudice to
my argument, concede all the Noble Lord
can claim from the motion of 1713, though I
am far from making that admission in fact;
but if I were to grant that in the year 1713,
some indications of indisposition and alienation
between the countries remained; that six short
years of Union had not completely appeased
and obliterated the animosities of four centu-
ries, but that six years more had been suffi-
cient for that purpose; that after the lapse of
six years from their Union, no trace of unkind-
ness was discernible, and, that in twelve years
after that Union, the strongest provocation had
failed in exciting it, I do not think, I say, that
for the purpose of the present argument, I
shall

shall have made a concession of much value or importance ; and with this remark I shall pass forward to times of which I am entitled to speak with the confidence of personal knowledge. I will venture then to assure your Lordships, and to speak for my neighbours as well as myself, that at this day we see without humiliation or regret, those towers and beacons, which were very necessary appendages of our independence, at least, before the union of the crowns; when we had a predatory enemy within ten miles of us ; we behold, I say, without mortification or concern, those badges of imperial dignity mouldering, and in ruins, on our rocks, while we can see the plains below covered with crops, which he who sows is now sure of reaping ; and while we can extend our views of national greatness and dignity, and all our public feelings, whether of pride or of affection, not only beyond the little range of hills that we look upon, but to the remotest extremities of the habitable globe. I will venture to declare for my country, that with the exception of those false Scotchmen, whom the enemy has been able to corrupt or to delude and who, I trust, for the honour of Scotland are both few and contemptible ; but with the exception

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exception of the partizans of France, I will venture to pronounce, that there does not at this hour live a Scotchman of any degree or condition, from Berwick to the Orkneys, whose British patriotism would not be more offended, and certainly much more reasonably, by a proposal for separating these kingdoms, than the patriotism of Fletcher of Saltown, or Lockhart of Carnwath, could be at the beginning of the century, by the proposal for uniting them.

I have dwelt somewhat longer on this topic than, perhaps, I ought, principally for the purpose of shewing what the nature and value of that object is, for which Ireland has been persuaded to renounce and reject with anger, the greatest and most evident advantages that were ever offered to a nation. It is in the first place, then, a sentiment, or feeling, which it is difficult to define, and not perhaps easy even to conceive distinctly. In the next place, this sentiment, such as it is, is so limited in duration, and so obsequious to events, that it is not enough to say that it expires. It actually changes sides—and the very sacrifices we would make to it at one period, will, at a sub-

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sequent point of time, and from thence ever after, prove as much in contradiction with, and as offensive to, this very feeling, as it might be welcome and grateful to it before. What then is this mighty object to which such sacrifices are required? It is an airy unsubstantial sentiment; it is a transient, evanescent, metaphysical point, to which we are called upon to sacrifice not only the solid and substantial, but the permanent and perpetual interests of two great nations.

I confess I cannot persuade myself to rank a sentiment so subtle, and subject to so many refined and delicate modifications, with that sound and genuine affection, or I can class it only as a subordinate mode of that plain and manly passion, which has deserved, by excellence, the style and dignity of patriotism. True patriotism will, I think, be found to rest on the solid basis of some rational and useful principle, which will keep it uniform and uninfluenced by time or circumstance, and which may serve as a criterion to distinguish its own genuine and steady course, from the capricious and irregular motions of some of its many counterfeits. The love of our country may be
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rational or fantastical as that of any other object; and, I must consider patriotism as partaking sufficiently of the nature of general affection, to acknowledge it for genuine, only when it is evinced by solicitude for the welfare of its object. I fix on this as the distinctive character of sincere affection, whether for our country or for any other object of regard. Public love is founded in utility, and by that mark alone may challenge its descent from Heaven. The rest is all spurious, and to be viewed rather with caution than respect. On this clear principle, then, shall we not say, that a true patriot proposes to himself before all things, the prosperity and happiness of those who inhabit his country? He may set a value, if he pleases, on the distinct existence, and individuality of that country; but if his love be well regulated, and all its modes and affections be in due subordination, he will prefer the solid and real happiness of his country to its metaphysical identity. It is to this chaste and disciplined patriotism, that I would appeal, on the present question, against the noisy and clamorous pretence, which would usurp its seat, and bear away the decision by acclamation and tumult, before a sober and enlightened judgment, founded

founded on the solid basis of public utility, can silence this importunate and delusive feeling: To sum up my argument on this point, in plain, but I think, satisfactory terms; if a separate political existence is contrary, nay fatal to the real interests of the people of Ireland; and if a perfect incorporation and union with the British Empire, must be productive of security, aggrandizement and happiness to Ireland, such an Union should on this single but decisive ground, of great and permanent utility, be the first and fondest wish of every Irish heart.

But let us yield even this principle for a moment. Let us subscribe to that strange incomprehensible duty which I have heard proclaimed with a sort of triumph, even in this House, and by which it is required that in a question such as this, the Legislature should banish from their thoughts and contemplation every concern for the interests of the nations which they represent, and that the decision of this mighty question should be founded on any thing but its influence on the national advantage or security. Let us admit the insignificance of Irish prosperity and happiness, and the exclusive title of what is called distinctness and dignity, to our

our solicitude; I still say that even these objects are not provided for, by rejecting the present measure. For the choice does not lie between the present condition of Ireland and Union. We are not ignorant that the alternative is according to every moral probability, union or separation; that is to say union or ruin; union with Great Britain, or slavery to France. If this measure be not adopted, we know that the distinctness of Ireland must expire; that her political extinction must be accomplished; that she must undergo a change a thousand fold more degrading, as well as destructive, and more fatal to her independence and dignity, by means which no mistaken patriotism can prefer. I mean by subjection to a foreign conqueror, or at best by a debased and slavish dependence on the general tyrant and task-master of Europe. Instead of preserving her present independence, or acquiring new accession of importance and dignity, by her association with the British Empire, Ireland is in danger of dropping into that common sepulchre of nations, which has already buried the very names and memories of so many states and kingdoms, now no more. Will the identity or the dignity of Ireland be preserved,

preserved, when after being first the dupe and the servile tool of France, she becomes her real and effectual slave, under some ridiculous or antiquated nick-name, invented or revived, for the very purpose of obliterating her own?

Let us consider this question in one view more, and setting aside both the real interests of Ireland, and the chances of separation with its attendant calamities, let us only compare the present condition of Ireland in mere dignity, with its future condition, in that single respect, after the Union; for we shall find the opposers of the Union mistaken in the means of consulting even barren dignity, when they prefer the present situation of Ireland to its incorporation with the British Empire.

In what does the dignity of a nation truly consist? Is it merely in its *separate*, or in its *independent* existence? If Ireland, from the very nature of things, is, and always must, while it is a separate kingdom, remain, in some respects and in some degree, dependent, subordinate, inferior; and the day after its Union with Great Britain, becomes altogether independent, sovereign and equal, how is its dignity

nity better assured by the former condition than by the latter? We must enquire then what the present situation of Ireland truly is, in point of independence.

Although I should wish to be perfectly frank and explicit, in pointing out those circumstances of necessary and unavoidable subordination which really exist, I would by no means insist on others, which I have heard enlarged upon, I think, with a false pride on our part, and perhaps with reasonable offence to the national feeling of Irishmen, and which, at the same time, do not appear to me genuine tokens of subordination in any respect. Of this description, I consider the necessity under which Ireland labours of claiming, in times of danger, whether from foreign or domestic enemies, the protection of the British navy, and military, as well as pecuniary aid from this country. I conceive Ireland to have a perfect right to this friendly and brotherly co-operation, on two grounds, which seem to me to preclude altogether, either a mortifying humiliation on one hand, or an offensive pride on the other. First, the preservation of Ireland is an English interest, and is a concern sufficiently

ently precious to call for these exertions, even on a distinct and separate view of our own advantage. In the next place, Ireland is entitled to this support, from an Empire to which she is associated, and to the general service and security of which she is herself contributing, cheerfully, and at all times, in every branch of public service. Her seamen, her soldiers, and her revenue, all augment the general stock of British resources. And if peculiar and temporary emergencies have, at this, or any other particular period, increased the local demands of Ireland on the exertions of the Empire, we must recollect, that the scene of danger, may at other times be shifted; and we have no reason to doubt, but, on the contrary, have recent grounds, very honourable to Ireland, for believing, that she will be ready to furnish extraordinary exertion, and aid, to repel extraordinary danger on this side of the water, if such occasions should arise.

I must also dissent from another topic which I have heard used, as indicating a national dependence of Ireland on Great Britain. I mean the advantages which she derives from the extensive commerce without, and the prosperous manu-

manufactures within, which are supposed to flow, and which, I believe, really do flow, in a great part, from a free participation in the imperial greatness of Great Britain, and from encouragements which she might withhold if so advised. Here again, I think, Ireland may accept, I will not say, without gratitude, but without humiliation, as Great Britain ought to bestow without pride. When the question has been stated between entire separation and Union, these considerations are very pertinently submitted to the prudence of Ireland, as they have been, with great ability, by the Noble Lord * who preceded me; for the advantages alluded to, would, no doubt, be withdrawn with perfect justice, and indeed, by indispensable policy, if all connexion between us were dissolved. But when the question is placed on the footing of the present argument, that is to say, on a view of our present imperial relation, I then feel, that considering the importance of that relation to Great Britain, as well as to Ireland, the communication of these imperial advantages seems to belong to the very nature of the case, and to flow naturally from the

* Lord Auckland.

-sentiment of fraternity and reciprocal kindness which should accompany such a connexion. These favours seem to be prompted certainly by a liberal, but at the same time, by a wise policy; they are the gifts of an elder to a younger brother; not the wages paid by a superior to a dependant. They ought to excite gratitude, and to improve as well as to secure affection between us; but they need not either exalt the pride of one, or humble that of the other; and, to say the truth, I cannot help feeling that the pride of Ireland may be very well reconciled to an obligation, for which she has the consciousness of returning in the reciprocal blessings of imperial connexion, an ample and corresponding equivalent. I erase, therefore, such topics as these, from my argument of Irish subordination. They appear to me not more inconclusive to that point, than somewhat removed, perhaps, from that liberality which ought to characterize such discussions, whether between individuals or nations; and if these obligations of Ireland to Great Britain are ever enlarged upon, I confess I should see it with more pleasure in Ireland, than in this country.

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Those real indications of subordination, on which I mean however to rely, appear to me such as ought not to mortify Ireland; because they are derived from the very nature and constitution of human affairs, and especially from one cause, which must afford, I conceive, rather gratification than disgust to national feeling, I mean the imperial connexion which makes Ireland a member of the noblest empire of the globe. For what, after all, is this imperial connexion in the necessity of which we are all agreed? If it be any thing more than a name, and if it afford any substantial advantage, does it not consist in securing a conformity, or rather a perfect uniformity and unity, in the counsels of the two countries on affairs of imperial concern? Such are, in some respects the regulation of commerce; the transactions and intercourse with foreign states; the declaration of war; the conduct and direction of war; the negotiation and conditions of peace. These are the principal, if not all the points of imperial or common concern; and in these it is admitted, and it is manifest that, for common safety and advantage, the two countries must be governed by one mind, and directed by one will, to the same end. Now
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let me ask in what manner is uniformity to be ensured on points so much subject to doubt in themselves, submitted to a judgment, I mean that of the human mind, the variety and uncertainty of which is proverbial, and especially where some degree of temporary and occasional opposition, both of feeling and interest, may be looked for in particular seasons and circumstances—I need not go about to prove by any tedious argument, what is always conceded on this point, nor need I scruple to assert what the best Irish patriots, and warmest partizans of Irish independence have always freely acknowledged, that unity of counsels can be brought about and preserved, only by leaving the lead to one of these nations in those points on which it is necessary that they should agree. Every sensible and enlightened Irish statesman, has, I think, admitted that in imperial concerns, Ireland must, and ought to follow in the wake of Great Britain. Here then is one authentic and signal badge of real subordination. But how is this necessary acquiescence of Ireland to be ensured? For it stands as yet on discretion and prudence, not on positive provision. May not an interval of passion, or the spleen of some contentious moment, or the influence of some popular

popular leader, persuade Ireland, in an evil hour, to assert her right of separate and independent deliberation in the common concerns, and to vindicate that right, by setting up an opinion of her own, different from that adopted in England? Against this misfortune, which would otherwise be pretty sure of happening, the constitution of our connexion with Ireland has provided some securities. In the first place we have the same King. The King of Great Britain is, in virtue of that crown, King also of Ireland. Ireland is content to follow the fortunes of England in that great point; and this I state as another circumstance of dependence. But there are other still more sensible tokens of practical subordination—The whole executive government of Ireland is administered by a viceroy, appointed indeed by the Sovereign of Ireland, but not with the advice of an Irish cabinet. He is appointed, in effect, by a British Minister, he is subject to instructions from a British Secretary of State, and responsible for every part of his administration municipal as well as imperial, not to the Irish Parliament, not to the Irish Laws, but to the British Parliament and its high tribunals. Even this is not all; for all this may be thought inseparable

rable from the nature and frame of our connexion. There remains a point which was not so much the unavoidable consequence of the imperial constitution, but was thought subject to such a moral and political necessity, as to have been deliberately assented to and retained by the most enlightened and ardent patriots of Ireland, even in the jealous review of her constitution, which took place at that period of enthusiasm and triumph which is become the grand era of Irish freedom and pride, I mean the year 1782. The circumstance I now allude to is this. The legislative functions of the sovereign of Ireland can be performed only under the Great Seal, not of Ireland, but of Great Britain. Notwithstanding the extreme and jealous tenderness of the Irish nation, on all that could remotely, or even in the refinements of political subtlety, affect the independence of their Parliament; although that Parliament is the shrine on which the nation itself is, it seems, now to be laid a victim; that Irish Parliament was left, and remains at this hour, dependent for the validity of every one of its legislative acts, first on the Chancellor of England, and through his responsibility, on that very Parliament of England,

England, an equal participation in the authority of which is thought so degrading to Ireland. God forbid that Ireland should change her mind on these points of voluntary subordination, or that her pride should supersede her wisdom, and a false dignity take the place of her substantial interests at least in these particulars. For such are the few slender threads which yet hold together these ponderous bodies, and whenever they are broken we part for good. There is yet one other circumstance which not only indicates inferiority, but is so wholly irreconcilable with every notion of equality, and appears to me such a singularity in the condition of any country claiming the character of independent sovereignty, that I must add it to the list before I quit this topic. Ireland must take her part in all the wars of Great Britain. She must bear her share of their burthens, and incur all their hazards. She may lose a province, or may become herself a province of the enemy. Yet Ireland cannot, by the utmost success of the war, acquire an acre of new territory to the Irish dominion. Every acquisition made by the forces of the Empire, however great her share may have been in the danger or exertion, accrues

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to the Crown of Great Britain. If an island were taken by regiments raised in Ireland, and composed wholly of Irishmen, and by ships manned altogether by Irish seamen, that island is a British conquest and not an Irish one. Ireland claims no sovereignty in any one of the foreign possessions or provinces of the British Empire. She pretends to no dominion in India, in Ceylon, at the Cape of Good Hope, at Martinique, Trinidad, or Minorca. The Irish Parliament has never asserted or conceived the right of legislating for any of the conquests of the King of England, that is to say, of the King of Ireland. They are all subject *ipso facto*, to the Legislature of Great Britain. Ireland has planted no Irish colonies, but has furnished planters to all those of Great Britain. In a word, this whole class of sovereign rights and capacities, however inherent in the very nature of sovereignty, is wholly wanting in that of Ireland. If we were asked to define, or at least to describe an independent sovereignty, should we err much by saying, it is a state which can make war and peace, which can acquire dominion by conquest, and which can plant colonies, and establish foreign settlements? And, if we would describe a subordinate

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nate and dependent country, could we do it better than by saying, it is a country which must contribute her quota to all the wars of a neighbouring kingdom, must incur all the risks of those wars and partake in all their disasters; while all that is acquired by their success falls, like the lion's share, to that country with which it claims to be co-ordinate and co-equal. I will insist no further on this ungracious topic. What I have said, was necessary for my argument, and if I have demonstrated the real subordination of Ireland, it was certainly not for the disingenuous pleasure of gratifying the vanity of one nation, at the expence of another, but only to observe that subordination must be the constant companion of an imperial connexion with a more powerful and more considerable state, and that pride can fly only to one of two remedies; I mean, total and absolute separation, or a perfect, incorporating and equalizing Union.

This argument is often conducted as if the question lay between distinct existence and total extinction. This is a false view of the alternative. If Ireland foregoes her separate individuality, it is not to perish; but still preserv-
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ing in full life and vigour, her own existence, she becomes identified with a larger whole ; and so far from the pretended annihilation, with which our adversaries would alarm her, she appears to me to acquire new extension. I would ask, in what manner is an inhabitant of any province or county of Ireland degraded, when he is enabled to say that he is an Irishman, and that he is besides a citizen of the united empire of Great Britain and Ireland ; and when instead of admission, as it were, by courtesy, to an indirect and circuitous advantage from the greatness of another country, to which he himself claims to be in some sort a stranger, he can assert as clear a title and as positive ownership and property in the glory and prosperity of the empire to which he will belong, as any native of Great Britain can do at this moment ? I cannot better describe the condition of Ireland after the Union, or better illustrate the improvement of its independence and dignity, than by saying, that her situation will from that moment be precisely the same in all points with that of Great Britain herself. Unless we suppose, therefore, Ireland in her present situation, more independent and less subordinate than Great Britain, we cannot imagine

gine that her independence will be diminished by the Union. And if it be true, as we have shewn, that she is at present, dependent, and subordinate to Great Britain in many respects, it is clear, that a Union which shall have the effect of placing the two countries on a footing of perfect equality, must improve the independence and dignity of the inferior, that is to say, of Ireland. Is Ireland then annihilated by these means? No; Ireland is still Ireland, while a new scope is given to the pride, and a larger field opened to the patriotism of every Irishman. Let me ask, in fine, where we shall discover in the present condition of Ireland, that superior degree of independent dignity, which should outweigh the real and solid benefits of Union; or where we can perceive in the change which that Union will operate on the political situation of Ireland, the degradation and indignity which should forbid her even to deliberate, and raise an insuperable barrier, both to her aggrandizement and happiness?

I do conceive, indeed, how the situation of some individuals may be such as to afford a greater share of personal consideration or advantage

vantage in Ireland, while confined within its present limits, than they might obtain on the greater theatre of the united kingdoms. Even here, indeed, the computation may be fallacious; but however that question may stand with regard to individuals, I am sure that the inhabitants of Ireland will gratify a found love of national dignity, while they procure to their country unspeakable advantages of every other sort, by their accession to the noble empire of which the Union would make them citizens.

I must therefore conclude, that although I must respect the feelings of those who, following this instinct of national pride, which I have allowed to be in some sort natural, have been blinded to the true merits of this question, either as it regards the interests or the dignity of their country; and, although I cannot refuse a considerable degree of indulgence, even to the intemperance and violence excited by any form of patriotism, and even by its errors; yet I must persist in saying, that those will ever appear to me to have evinced a more genuine, a more profound and solicitous affection for their country, who have not refused to deliberate

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liberate on such mighty interests, but have resisted a first and false impulse, and chosen for their guide rather the slower and less captivating torch of reason, than the more lively flashes of passion and prejudice. Nor can I refrain from adding, that if there be indeed any individuals, or descriptions of men, who not misled themselves, but far above the influence of those delusions which they have practised upon the multitude, have seen nothing in this great question but personal or local interests, and have sought to mask a narrow preference of individual and partial advantage, under this pretence of national pride and feeling; if such men, I say, with these motives at the bottom of their hearts, and with the profanation of a great public virtue on their lips, have frustrated the wise and paternal counsel given by our common Sovereign for the permanent and perpetual benefit, and not less for the present and immediate preservation of the empire in all its parts, and especially of their own particular country; I own I cannot part with this subject, without declaring loudly, that I envy, neither the pillows and consciences of those men, nor the place they are likely to fill in the history of their country.

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There is yet one objection on which I am disposed to trespass on your Lordship's indulgence, rather from the importance which has been given to it by those who oppose the Union, than from any weight I think it entitled to myself. The point I now allude to, is a supposed disability in the respective Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland to sanction such a measure.

This is another objection on which the merits of the main question are waved, and in which those who have been defeated on that ground, or who are conscious that they must be so, would still take refuge. It resembles a plea to the jurisdiction; and, although I am far from assenting to a very absurd doctrine which I have heard falsely ascribed to our law, that he who pleads to the jurisdiction shall abide by that plea; and when it has been overruled shall not plead over, but be concluded on the facts and merits of his cause; yet I think myself entitled to claim thus much from those who resort to this objection. That, although after it has been overruled, and the jurisdiction of Parliament has been established, they shall be at liberty to recur back to the question

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question of expediency; yet, while we are discussing the question of competence, and for the purpose of that argument, the merits shall be granted. The objection cannot otherwise be placed on its own proper and peculiar ground. For, if the competence of Parliament were disputed merely on the ground of inexpediency in the particular act, it must be felt in a moment that the question of competence with regard to the Union, would stand exactly on the same footing as if it related to any other legislative measure, however clearly within the acknowledged powers and daily practice of Parliament. In order to obtain, therefore, a distinct and substantive judgment on the question of competence, it must be kept pure; and uncomplicated with any other consideration; which can only be done by trying it in a case of admitted expediency. I think myself entitled, then, for the purpose of this argument, to assume, that the proposed Union would be beneficial to both countries, and I am at liberty to state its advantages, or its necessity as high as I please. In a word, my adversary in this argument must assent to the measure as expedient and necessary, denying, only, the authority of Parliament to execute it.

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Now, if a measure be expedient, I am to ask, in the first place, why may it not be executed by Parliament? and, in the next place, if Parliament is not competent, where shall we find a more adequate authority? I have, for me, the general rule and law of the Constitution, which establishes the universal authority of the Legislature, and defines it by no limits or qualification that I am acquainted with. Whatever the whole nation could do, if there were no Parliament, is within the regular and fundamental powers of Parliament. This is admitted to be the general rule; and here I might plant my foot, at least until the exception were specified, and the principle of that exception established. The universality of Parliamentary power has been characterized by the strong and emphatic title of Omnipotence. And, in the theory of our Constitution, strong and emphatic as this phrase is, it need not, I think, be deemed, merely a bold figure, as it has been called by some writers on our Government, but as literally and correctly descriptive of parliamentary supremacy, and of the unlimited sovereignty of the British Legislature.

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I am aware of the reply generally made to this assertion of unlimited power. I may be told, that powers unlimited in theory, are yet finite and controuled in practice, and that, in its exercise, the most unbounded authority is still circumscribed, at least within the moral boundaries of right and wrong. I assent to this restriction, and even assert it; but what does my adversary gain by this concession? Parliament ought not to do what is wrong, and is to be supposed incapable of doing it. In this sense, the power of Parliament, is no more limited than the Divine Omnipotence itself, which is incapable of evil. I say also of Parliament, that it is incapable of evil; and I say it in this sense, that what Parliament does is not to be accounted evil, but is to be taken and acquiesced in as right—Why? will it be said. Is not Parliament composed of men, and therefore fallible? Yes—but who must judge the fallibility of Parliament, and to whom must its questionable acts be submitted—if it be not to other men, yet more fallible than themselves? For I wish to know where men are to be found, or in what forms or combinations they are to be assembled, to whom
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such a superlative authority could with safety be confided.

The more we turn this argument, and the more carefully it is viewed on all its sides and bearings, the more we shall be satisfied, that the only security we possess for every thing valuable in the British Government; that all that conduces to order and happiness; that the whole efficacy of our Constitution towards its great and beneficial purposes, resides in this single principle, of the unlimited, unqualified, supremacy of Parliament. There is no appeal, acknowledged in the Constitution, from that authority, because no appellate tribunal can be imagined, habile to such a jurisdiction; none from which the wisdom of those many ages, which have brought our Constitution to maturity and excellence, has not already constituted an appeal, final and conclusive in all cases whatever, to that very Parliament, from which you would, again, appeal back to them. Observe the vicious circle into which this appeal from the Parliament to the People must lead us. The people at large cannot conveniently, nor safely for themselves, make law, or administer

administer Government. The Constitution of Parliament has therefore been framed, as affording the most commodious and perfect organ of Law and Government, and the best and most secure depositary of the sovereign authority. But their acts must, it seems, be questioned, and their authority superseded by that very people at large, whose inability and unaptness have given occasion to the institution of Parliament. The speedy resolution of the argument into this contradiction and absurdity, is, therefore, manifest.

It is easy to foresee that this claim of unlimited power may be opposed by the counter-claim of a right to resist an abuse and perversion of authority, however legal. This question of resistance, that is to say, concerning the right of the subject to oppose by force, the act or orders of the legal sovereign, by which your Lordships know, I should not mean, in this country merely the throne, but that I speak of that body in which the full sovereignty of any nation resides, according to the established Constitution of its Government, and which, with reference to this kingdom, would be the Parliament; the point, I say, thus explained,
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of resistance, at the discretion of the subject, to the legal sovereign, is of no trivial concern, and ought not to be rashly or irreverently approached. The question is of high import, and delicate complexion. It appears to me, to be one of those mysteries, the acknowledgment of which is much connected with its reclusive sanctity, and its being withdrawn from daily and vulgar contemplation, to be reserved only for the great occasions which are worthy to draw it forth, and, "*like a robe pontifical,*" "*—ne'er to be seen, but wondered at.*" I believe it is impossible that any thing better should be said on this subject, than what I find quoted by an eloquent patriot of my own country, Mr. Fletcher, of Saltown, from the mouth of Mr. William Colvin, whom he styles one of the wisest men Scotland ever had, and who, speaking of defensive arms, that is to say, the right of the subject to carry arms, for the purpose of resisting oppression from the Sovereign, was used to express himself in these remarkable words: "That it were to be wished
 " all Princes thought them lawful, and the
 " People unlawful. No wish can be more salutary, and no answer to this delicate and important question can be more perfectly wise
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as well as discreet. I confess, also, that on this single subject, I do not like the solution the worse for being somewhat oracular.— But if a peremptory opinion be demanded, and we must needs pronounce, I think myself entitled to answer generally in the language of the constitution. No limit has been appointed to the authority of the sovereign; nor any exception specified to the obedience of the subject. The constitution has not foreseen any case of resistance, and has made no provision for it. Such a case is not, and cannot be, in the contemplation of any constitution whatever. A pre-established, that is to say, a constitutional right of resistance to the constitutional sovereign is a solecism; a mere contradiction in terms. It can exist in no constitution that either is, or ever was, because it is inconsistent with the very notion of constitution, or government. We must answer, then, that resistance is illegal, and is contrary to the law, in every form of government of which law is the foundation. If an extreme case be put to me, I may well refuse to answer it, until the case arise in practice. Stated theoretically, it is always a snare. When it happens practically the case will answer for itself; and
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if resistance would not follow on the spur of any provocation that can be stated, without the previous sanction of some declared, and anticipated authorization in the constitution to legalize it, it is a case which we may pronounce, by that very criterion, unfit to produce or justify resistance. Every case of resistance must stand as it were upon its own individual responsibility, and must be such as to provide for itself, without the aid of any antecedent principle to lean upon. Such cases, whatever may be said of them by history, whatever may be felt of them by the generous sympathies of mankind, must look for no support from law, with which they cannot co-exist; they are all without the pale of law and all illegal; they are all extra-constitutional; all in direct contradiction with the particular constitution, as well as with the general principle of government; they are mere solitary, insulated, substantive facts, equally incapable of deriving from, or generating any binding analogy of general and permanent authority. These questions are not new in this country. We have passed through a century of such controversies, and have, since that period, enjoyed a century more of happiness, the fruit of the

the wise and profound, as well as spirited judgment of our ancestors on these debates; a judgment, as your Lordships know, equally removed, on one hand, from a mean and pusillanimous acquiescence under oppression, and on the other from those shallow but ruinous abstractions which so much pains are taken to bring once more into fashion. We do not come, therefore, in England, so raw into these discussions, as to be misled by the juvenile refinements of political metaphysics, or by the early puerilities of those who may have read their Locke without reading history, or who in reading their Locke have forgot their history, into errors, which we know to be as fatal to the practical blessings of liberty, as to the strength and stability of government. We know that an established system and theory of resistance is but another word for anarchy; and that, whatever be the excellence of any constitution in other respects, however wisely and skilfully constructed it may be, even for stability, in its other provisions, let there be added this one principle of a permanent and subsisting right to resist, even in the most limited case, since the existence of that case must, by the very nature of the thing, be submitted to

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the discretion of every individual in the state, that constitution will bear in its bosom the seed of its own dissolution, and a principle of dispersion and demolition, utterly irreconcilable with the tranquillity or peace of the people, and destructive of all tenacity and duration in the government.

But it will be said, this is not a question of resistance, and we are enquiring only whether this measure does not exceed the limits of that authority with which the constitution has invested Parliament.

I am then, to ask, since the power of Parliament is general and undefined, in what respect is this particular act distinguishable from others which are admitted to be within its competence, in such a manner as to become an exception to the general rule of the constitution. And here I am under the difficulty of those who are to combat without an adversary, or to combat an adversary whom they cannot see. I am to search for my opponent, or must begin by creating the enemy whom I am afterwards to engage. For as yet I have certainly heard nothing precise on this subject.

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I must, therefore, look amongst the distinctive qualities of this measure, for some circumstance on which to found the exception. The first circumstance I observe in the Union of two countries, is an extension of territory, compared with the former bounds and surface of each, since each is respectively augmented by the accession of the other. But this effect of Union cannot be a ground of disqualification to Parliament, since the constitution commits the same power to a narrower authority. I mean the prerogative of the Crown alone. If a conquest be made without any contrary stipulation, the conquered country becomes subject, *ipso facto*, to the Legislation of Parliament. The King may also obtain by treaty the annexation of any new territory to his Crown, by which means it will fall, of course, under the Government of the British Parliament. In both these ways the dominion of Great Britain can be enlarged, to any extent, by the sole prerogative of the Crown—and much more by the King in Parliament. We must look, then, for some other circumstance in this case to exclude the general authority of Parliament.

Besides

Besides extending the bounds of the kingdom, at present subject to the sovereignty of Parliament, a Legislative Union extends and enlarges Parliament itself, accommodating the size of the Legislature to the accession of territory. It amounts then to an alteration in the frame and condition of Parliament; and we are to enquire whether Parliament is, on that account, disqualified from performing it.

It may be worth while to remark, in the first place, that this formal change is however consonant with the general spirit and genius of the Constitution. Is it not fair, while we are discussing the conditions under which two countries are to be united, to consider what would have been the case if they had been one from the beginning? Would not Ireland, in that case, have had representatives in the Legislature? It would not be difficult to shew from history, that while Ireland was considered as exclusively under the Government of the English Parliament, that is to say, before the institution of the Irish Parliament, that country sent members to the Parliament of England. The same principle has generally, though
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I do not say without exception, operated in similar cases, I mean in cases of the accession of contiguous territories. Of this, Wales, the Counties Palatine, and Scotland, are familiar examples. The minor instances of Calais, and Berwick on Tweed, may have been less attended to, but they illustrate also this general propensity of our Constitution. While Calais was subject to the Crown of England, that town enjoyed and exercised, by charter from Harry the Eighth, the privilege of sending two burgeses to Parliament. And as soon as Berwick on Tweed, which being a frontier town, frequently changed masters according to the various fortune of war, was at length settled under the dominion of England, by the union of both Crowns, and the final extinction of war, at the accession of James the First, that town received also the franchise of returning members to Parliament. The Constitution, in a word, leans that way: and it may, perhaps, reasonably be thought a greater violence to that Constitution, and a more fundamental and essential change, to add extensive territories to the country already governed by Parliament, without giving to those territories a participation in the Constitution, and a share in the

the representation, than to accompany such an accession of territory with a legislative as well as an incorporating union. Yet, no man disputes the power of the Crown, according to the prerogative which I have lately stated, to operate the former and the greater change even without the aid of Parliament. It is not, then, fair to argue, *a fortiori*, and *a multo fortiori*, that the larger authority of the whole Legislature, shall be more competent, or much more competent, to the smaller change, that is to say, to extend the bounds of the empire in a manner congenial and in unison with the Constitution, as it would do in the measure proposed, than the narrower power of the prerogative can be to the greater change, that is to say, to an accession of territory and an union with other countries, on a principle abhorrent from the genius of our Government. Yet the competence of these latter acts, whether to the Crown or to the Parliament, has never been disputed; and rests, indeed, too firmly on the repeated and ordinary exercise of their powers to admit of question.

But let us return to this objection, and admit, that a Legislative Union with Ireland, must

must operate a change on the condition, or even on the Constitution of Parliament; and let that change be as considerable as the objector would choose to state it. Does it follow that such a change on Parliament cannot be made by Parliament, as it may be said in physics, that a body cannot act upon itself? Such an alteration appears to me, neither more nor less than a law, and as such, to fall within the natural province of the law-giver, who, in this country, is the Parliament. How will it be shewn that these laws, affecting the Constitution of Parliament, are alone incompetent to Parliament? Our own experience has taught us the contrary. I dare say there are very few of your Lordships who have not assisted in the passing of laws precisely of this description, and, however warmly such measures may have been resisted or debated on other grounds, I will venture to say, there is not one of us who has ever heard or known this objection, of the insufficiency of Parliament, opposed to them. The various laws for limiting the duration of parliaments, for regulating elections, for altering the qualification of electors, or elected, for disfranchising offending boroughs, and communicating their franchises to strangers, that
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is to say, for example, to the freeholders of a neighbouring hundred; all these, and many more, falling precisely within the principle of this objection, have been passed, by no higher authority than that of Parliament. What are all those proposals for what is called sometimes moderate, sometimes radical reform, but laws for the alteration, for the total subversion of the Constitution of Parliament? To me they have appeared little short of revolution, incipient revolution. Yet, I have never heard one of those, who with similar views of these projects, have been better qualified than myself, by talents and weight in this country, to oppose them, object the incompetence of Parliament to entertain and to adopt these changes in its own Constitution, if they should appear expedient.

An alteration of the established religion, which has always been the work of Parliament, is another change, and a most fundamental one in its Constitution; since the whole parliamentary franchise, whether elective or representative, is transferred from one class and description of the people to another. The whole

whole is taken from all those who possessed it, and vested in those who did not.

The laws so frequently made by Parliament for altering and regulating the succession to the Crown, bears a strong analogy to the case which is now objected to, amounting, indeed, to a total change in one whole branch or member of the Parliament.

This objection, then, cannot be maintained *simpliciter*, on the incompetence of Parliament to make an alteration on its own constitution, or condition; and we must come, in fine, to the single point which my imagination can suggest, as a possible ground of distinction, namely, the great and superlative importance and magnitude of this transaction. We have seen that all other cases of a similar nature, *ejusdem generis*, are within the acknowledged powers of Parliament, and the daily exercise of those powers. But this is a measure, we must say, of such transcendent importance, as to exceed the ordinary capacities entrusted by the Constitution to Parliament, and to which the inherent sovereignty of the people itself is alone commensurate.

I can conceive no other rational shape into which this argument can be cast; but is it rational in substance also; or is it not the most palpable and the grossest violation of reason, the widest departure from every sound principle in the theory either of this constitution, or of government in general? It would be strange indeed if this point of superior importance should serve my adversary, since it is the very ground on which I rest most firmly my claim of exclusive cognizance to the Parliament.

On what principle is the trust of legislation committed to Parliament at all? Because no people on earth, not even the smallest population in the smallest territory, could ever exercise a democratic legislation in its entire and theoretical purity. If we look back to that most antient and simple of all constitutions, I mean the patriarchal, or the government of families, which has been regarded as the first, and original model and archetype of all succeeding governments, we shall find that even these have rejected a mode of administration which it was, at least, easier to execute, with in the walls of a single tent, or the bounds of a wandering camp, and amongst a few individuals,

viduals, than in any other more populous state. Authority was still deposited with selection in fewer hands than the whole even of these narrow communities. The heads of families; the chiefs of tribes; the elders; in a word, some select body or other, administered these small commonwealths. It would lead to unprofitable length if I were to pursue this reasoning with minuteness, as it would be easy to do, up to the conclusion, to which we all assent; namely, that the people of England cannot make law for themselves in any democratic form of constitution; that they are not provided or acquainted with any institution which should enable them to perform this feat of self-legislation, even if they were desirous of attempting it. They have no comitia; no assemblies of the people in Hyde Park, or St. George's Fields, to the decrees of which the millions of absent Englishmen, owe, or choose to acknowledge any obedience. And there being a physical impossibility to collect their voices individually, even if that physical and practical impossibility, if I may say so without the imputation of incorrectness, were not the weakest objection to such a mode of legislation, there is an established organ of the general will,

will, qualified by its frame and constitution, to apply the collective wisdom of the nation to its collective interests, and to administer the sovereign power of the state on this secure and solid foundation. The sovereignty of Parliament, thus explained, is in the end no more; it is neither more nor less, but identically and precisely the same with the sovereignty of the people itself, appearing in the only visible, tangible or perceptible form in which it can be recognized in this country.

It is, then, first, on the vices and inabilities of all other modes by which the voice of the people can be expressed, or even its opinions formed agreeable to their general and collective interests; and secondly, on the peculiar and approved excellence of the Constitution which we enjoy, that the authority and sovereignty of Parliament has been established.

Let us endeavour, for a moment, to imagine some better mode of collecting, in a popular way, the sense of the nation, on any great point of policy or law, or, if you please, on this specific measure. Shall it be by meetings convoked by anonymous hand-bills, in the fields adjoining

adjoining to this metropolis, and directed by orators on carts, tubs, or other moveable rostra? Every one knows that an Union with Ireland, for the discussion of which such assemblies were to be called, would not be the first order of the day. The most pressing sympathies and fellow feelings of such a legislature would be for the suffering felons; traitors, or mutineers, in Newgate and Cold-bath-fields. Their first and second measures, in favour of the liberty and property of the subject, would be to deliver the gaols, and emancipate the bank; and they would soon simplify this intricate and complex Constitution, by uniting the legislative, the judicial, and the executive powers; as they would abridge the tedious delays of all those functions, by carrying, with their own hands, into instant effect, their own laws and judgments. I remember to have seen a Parliament deliberate in St. George's-fields in the forenoon; and I do not forget, that on the same evening I saw London and Westminster in flames. Shall the appeal from Parliament lie to county-meetings, called by the sheriffs, on the requisition of a few dozens of signatures; and shall the people of England be bound in this great interest, by a collation of the

the various and discordant resolutions, passed by a respectable shew of hands, at the different Georges and Angels of the kingdom? Shall the magistrates at quarter-sessions, shall grand juries at assizes; or, in fine, shall the church-wardens and overseers of the poor at parish vestries, supersede Parliament, on account of their superior wisdom and knowledge; and, above all, because they have received a more authentic and direct delegation from the people at large? Or shall we prefer, rather, those convivial parliaments which hold their sittings occasionally, at the different taverns of this city? whose resolutions, moved in the form of toasts, are agreed to in bumpers; and whose laws, proposed in stanzas, to the tune of a ballad, are passed in full chorus. Is not this jovial system of legislation, a mere inversion of the good old Constitution, which, if it permits the electors to be drunk, requires the Parliament to be sober? But must we, then, to speak seriously, depose the Parliament chosen by the people, in favour of these self-elected, self-balloted parliaments, attended by every small minorities of that Parliament which was chosen by the people, after they have withdrawn their attendance from that Parliament

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to which the people sent them? In fine, what is to be the form of this Arch-Parliament, which is to qualify it better than the British Parliament, as it now stands, for legislating, just in proportion as the subject is of higher import and dignity, and of greater compass and difficulty, than those ordinary acts of legislation to which those high authorities are utterly inadequate and incompetent? Is it not, then, manifest, that a legislature in which the sovereignty of the State is vested, because every other political body, known in this country, is deficient in the requisites for common and ordinary legislation, and because it is itself the most perfect model of human polity, in all matters of legislation, must be yet better entitled to preference and to exclusive and sovereign jurisdiction, in cases of great and signal importance, than in any other? It seems to me, therefore, the strangest perversion of reason, and the most palpable contradiction and absurdity, to place the incompetence of Parliament on that ground on which its sole and exclusive competence most firmly and securely rests; I mean the superior importance of this law.

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Having spoken to the principle, let us see how the question stands on authority.

I shall not encumber my argument with the authorities which are familiar in every mouth, to prove a position, not disputed in any quarter, namely, the general supremacy of Parliament; and I shall respect your Lordships' leisure sufficiently to omit the book authorities on this general but fundamental truth, although the passages I might refer to, assert distinctly, as your Lordships know, amongst other examples of the universal faculties of Parliament, its competence to this specifick measure of a legislative Union with other countries.

There are two sorts of authority: First, the opinions of learned and eminent men. Next, precedent.

To begin with the first, and to speak of the *responsa prudentum*.

To the learning of the corporations of Dublin, and of the freeholders of the county of Louth, and some other counties; to the authority

thority of some members of the Irish bar, I shall oppose the Chancellor of Ireland, and the Chiefs of the four Supreme Courts of Law in that country. I shall oppose the clear and unequivocal sense of the House of Lords of Ireland, evinced not only by its vote, but by the withdrawing that part of the amendment, proposed originally by Lord Powercourt, which involved that question. I shall oppose the opinion of the majority of the House of Commons of Ireland, for I think myself entitled to claim the dissent of that House to this proposition on a fair and candid view of its proceedings. The House once agreed, by a majority, however slender, to entertain the measure; and afterwards rejected it by a majority as slender; for the difference between one and five hardly deserves notice. If to this equality of opinion on the principal measure be added the consideration that the opposers of the Union did not even tender this proposition to the House; did not venture to load their question, with that denial of the competence of Parliament, of which it had been found necessary actually to relieve the same question in the House of Lords, we shall hardly doubt of their consciousness, that in a balance trimmed so nicely,

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this weighty point would have turned the scale against them. But as time adds sanction and reverence to authority, let me close this enquiry by opposing to all the rash and intemperate opinions, or rather declarations of opinion, which the temerity of party spirit, or a false and misguided enthusiasm, have dictated in Ireland at this day, the single authority of Lord Somers; himself, I think, a host, on such a question. If any man in England, or in Ireland, as has been often said of that great man, think himself a better Lawyer or a better Whig than Lord Somers, he is welcome to enter the lists; while I shall rest contented with this single name, supported as it might be by a cloud of learned, able, and upright statesmen, lawyers, and friends of liberty from that period to the present hour.

Let us now look at precedent. It is not to be expected that there should be many. Such transactions must be rare. It is enough for my argument, to say, that the only examples our history furnishes, of Legislative Unions, since the institution of Parliaments, are precedents in point on the question I am now debating; namely the competence of Parliament to enact

enact them. WALES and SCOTLAND have both been united to England by incorporating, Legislative Unions. In both cases the Parliament alone sanctioned the measure. The union with Scotland is, perhaps, yet more closely in point with the present proposal. Since a separate Parliament existed in both countries, and the respective Parliaments were the parties in the treaty. That treaty was negotiated under the authority of the two Parliaments; they sanctioned the conclusion; and they executed finally and irreversibly, that happy system, under which we now live secure, at the distance of almost a century.

Although our history cannot furnish many precedents of this precise measure, I mean, of incorporating Unions, there are, however, many examples of other proceedings, bearing a strong analogy to the present, and equal, if not superior, in importance. I mean those acts of the Legislature which have altered the succession to the Crown. I need not cite the instances of such changes. They are frequent in the History of England, and they all prove the supreme authority of Parliament, even in these highest acts of sovereignty. By what-

ever means such changes have been brought about; whatever has been the efficient cause, or instrument of such revolutions, they have all derived their sanction and validity from Parliament, the seal of which has always been resorted to by the new Sovereign, as the only effectual security for his title, whether he stood on a claim essentially good, or on successful usurpation. And the anxiety with which the many repetitions of parliamentary recognition have been sought after, by those who were interested in a new or questionable title, is remarkable on this argument.

But without dwelling on more antient examples, it is surely sufficient to recall that of the Revolution, which placed King William on the Throne, and the subsequent limitation of the Crown to the House of Hanover. Will it be said, that the declaration of King James's abdication, and the vacancy of the Throne, was a point of less note or value, or of a lower rank in the scale of sovereign functions, than the Union with Scotland, or Wales, or than the measure now in contemplation? Will it be said, that the whole transaction of the Revolution was of a lower or meaner class and order,

order, in legislation, than any Union, or any other national event that is either known or can be imagined. I do not fear that it will.— By what authority, then, was that great change in one branch of the Legislature, and in the condition of the nation, operated? To what authority was the Prince of Orange advised to resort, for the sanction of his enterprize and the security of his Crown? Observe the difference between the circumstances in which he stood, and those in which the present proceeding is tendered to Parliament. By the flight and abdication of the King, and the consequent vacancy of the Throne, an actual and practical dissolution of the Government seemed to have taken place, if it can ever do so, in any possible or imaginable case. It was in such a predicament, if it could happen in any, that the supposed dormant title of the people to administer the sovereignty in their own persons, so far at least as regarded the reintegration of the deficient and truncated Government, must have been awakened and called into action. That moment was, indeed, different from the present, in which we have every branch of the Legislature complete, and the whole frame of our Government not only perfect

perfect and apt to all its purposes, but in the actual and daily exercise of its functions; and in which we are ourselves debating this very question concerning parliamentary powers, within the walls of a subsisting Parliament, and in the ordinary discharge of our parliamentary duty. Yet, under the circumstances which I have described, what did the Prince of Orange resolve, under the direction of his whig advisers? Did he apply to the people at large in any new and anomalous form? Was it to county meetings, or assemblies in the fields, or, in a word, to any unknown and unusual organ of the public mind, that he applied to sanction his title? Far from it. Even the first Convention, under the authority of which he afterwards summoned the Convention Parliament, was composed, in the first place, of the House of Lords; and next, of those who had been members of Parliament in the reign of Charles the Second. It will not be said, that these persons had any specific delegation from the people, either for this special act, or for any other end; either express, by positive commission, or implied, by their recent election. A whole reign had elapsed since they came from the people. Their delegation and functions had

had been exhausted and had expired long since. Yet, so much preferable did this approximation to the regular constitutional authority, when an entire conformity with it was impossible; so much preferable did even this shadow, this surviving flavour of the parliamentary character, which still hung about these relics of a deceased Parliament, appear, when compared with any new and strange invention for conjuring up the latent sovereignty of the people, and substituting some phantom and chimera to represent that sovereignty in the room of its only true and acknowledged form, I mean that of Parliament, that the Prince of Orange did not think the validity of a Convention Parliament, to be summoned by his new authority, would stand on a sure foundation, until its convocation should receive the sanction, if not of a subsisting Parliament, at least of a body as nearly and closely resembling one as the circumstances admitted. The Convention Parliament was convoked—and that Parliament enacted the Revolution—which, however, was hardly yet deemed perfect, until it was consummated by the ratification of subsequent and yet more regular Parliaments.

the people. Their delegation and functions.

The subsequent limitation of the Crown, after the death of the Duke of Gloucester, was also the work of Parliament; and I believe so far from deeming that authority incompetent, or wishing to rely on any other higher or more transcendent power, none of those whig statesmen and lawyers who presided in every step of the revolution, and who had the protestant succession at heart, would have thought that great object secure, if the limitation to the Princess Sophia had stood on a decree of the people, conveyed by any other organ than precisely that which they employed, I mean the Parliament. If these great men, then, were content to rest the revolution itself, that vast and prime concern, embracing every other possible interest of Englishmen, on the single and perfect efficacy of an Act of Parliament, we are not to wonder if the same men thought the respective Parliaments of England and Scotland, the competent, and the only competent instruments to accomplish the Union between the two countries.

What overweening preference is it of our own times, or our own persons, that should make us thus fastidious in casting by, or of inferior

ferior and more imperfect growth, the constitutional whiggism and wholesome liberty of the reigns of King William and Queen Ann, to intoxicate ourselves and our country with that double refined, that sublimated and adulterated modern drug which is now poisoning the world. I own, for my part, that I like to see, on the liberty of my country, and your Lordships know the revered authority by which I am supported in that sentiment, that I like to see on my own and my country's liberty the seal of the old whigs, and am apt enough to think that counterfeit, which does not bear this mark. I am above all disposed to fly as from certain ruin, the spurious philosophy, the sophisticated, and fatal abstractions, which so far from lighting us to the temple of liberty, are but decoys to plunge the world into the toils of wretchedness and slavery. I confess, then, that I recoil with disgust and not without alarm, from every pretence for disavowing or superseding our established government, however qualified in time, occasion or limited purpose. I cannot think those men profitable servants of their country, nor do I think their country disposed to regard them as friends, who would weaken in the breasts of

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Englishmen the native and rooted love of our boasted government and laws; and divert the settled allegiance of the happiest people upon earth, from the established sovereignty of Parliament, in which, however, is inseparably bound up the whole of the security, prosperity and freedom, present and to come, of the British nation. And I must hold every proposal to abdicate or surrender the sovereign power of Parliament, but for an hour, into the hands of any strangers to the constitution, that is to say, into any other hands whatever, as a mere fraud upon the people; as a gross violation of its most precious privilege; as a flagrant invasion of the dearest birth-right of Englishmen, which consists according to me in the right to be governed by their Parliaments, and by no other human means.

There are a variety of topics, as your Lordships well know, to which I have not even alluded, and on some of which I should certainly be disposed to say a few words; but, in truth, I have already abused your indulgence, not only much too long, but, I am conscious, also, much too tediously; and I therefore refrain—very grateful for having been permitted
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to state such reasons as have satisfied my mind, on the whole matter, that this measure is expedient in itself, and that Parliament is competent to execute it. I have expressed a strong opinion, that the Union of these two nations, already united by nature in their interests, must, in the order of human events, necessarily come to pass; and I shall conclude by a sincere and fervent prayer, dictated by the purest and the most ardent desire for the happiness of both kingdoms, that the blessings sure to flow from a consummation so devoutly to be wished, may not be long delayed.

F I N I S.

K. Threlkeld



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SUBSTANCE
OF THE
SPEECH
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD SHEFFIELD,

Monday, April 22, 1799,

UPON THE SUBJECT OF
UNION WITH IRELAND.

PRINTED FROM A COPY CORRECTED BY HIS LORDSHIP.

D U B L I N :

PRINTED FOR J. MILLIKEN, 32, CRAFTON-STREET.

1799.

STANLEY
P. W. L. C. H.
D. SHEPHERD

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The Charter of the University moved the
matter of the day for taking into consideration
the Articles from the books upon the subject of
the Union with Ireland, which being read, he
moved that the said Articles be now taken into
consideration.

The Address was read twice, and the
Chairman of the House moved, That this
Address be now taken into consideration.



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April 22, 1799.

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THE Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the order of the day for taking into consideration the Address from the Lords upon the subject of the Union with Ireland; which being read, he moved that the said Address be now taken into consideration.

The Address was then read twice, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, That this House do concur with the said Address.

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Lord SHEFFIELD spoke as follows:

Mr. Speaker,

Sir, I wish it to be understood, that I support the resolutions and address, in confidence that the assurance given by a noble Lord in an official situation in Ireland will be strictly observed, namely, that Ministers will *look to the sense of Parliament and of the Country*, before the measure of Union shall again be brought forward there; and that assurance being given, I am not sensible of any sufficient argument that should prevent the British Parliament from giving some general explanation of the arrangement it is disposed to make, more especially as I observe that scarcely any man in this country objects to the principle of the measure; nor can I suppose, that a nation so well informed and so much accustomed to political considerations as the Irish, should for a long time persevere in refusing to receive or examine what may be proposed from the British Parliament; and for these reasons I wish to trouble the House with a few observations.

We cannot be much surprized at the alarm which has taken place in Ireland. The word Union was suffered to be bandied about there for many months without the slightest attempt on the part of Ministers to explain the terms of it.

it. The aid of designing men, and of those prejudiced from partial and local considerations, was scarcely necessary to take advantage of this circumstance: the apprehensions of Ireland had always been, that an equal and favourable Union would not be granted: and no small part of that people were made to believe, that their liberty, their independence, their dignity, and almost the existence of the nation, would be done away by their becoming one and the same with the most independent and most respectable nation in the world.

But, in truth, the measure of Union was ill-prepared for Ireland, and Ireland was ill-prepared for Union. It is not without competent information that I am convinced, if the outline of the liberal proposition for Union, which is now offered, had been at first properly communicated and with all the plainness and candour which suit the Irish character, it would have been very differently received; and it is not my opinion alone, but the opinion also of those who are not friendly to the measure, that it might have been accepted, at least it would have prevented all that misrepresentation and misapprehension which might well be expected, without some previous attention. I can hardly imagine a case, in respect to which, until understood, more jealousy was likely to be entertained than

than this of a legislative Union, otherwise the measure being really so necessary and so advantageous to Ireland, the strange abuse of the words "Dignity and Independence," which have been so entirely mistaken there would have made little impression. I can suppose it will be unpleasing at first to acknowledge, that the premature opposition was the result of an ill-founded jealousy. Yet that acknowledgment, and the consequent departure from an *hasty* opposition to the measure, is no more than may be fairly expected from the candid openness of the Irish character.

It is not now the question whether the measure has been brought forward and conducted as it should have been, but whether the British Parliament should do what depends on it to obviate the mischief which must arise from independent and separate Legislatures existing within the same empire, whether we should relinquish a measure which seems necessary to the general security and welfare, or take the present opportunity of stating the outline of it.

I shall not trouble the House with a repetition of historical inquiry into the causes of the present state of Ireland, nor with many references to the reports of the Lords and Commons of that kingdom. The causes and the proofs
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are but too plain. The notoriety of numberless melancholy facts, which demonstrate the wretched and dangerous condition of that country, with reason alarms every thinking man: it is an unanimous opinion in this country, that something is necessary to be done to preserve Ireland; and there seems to be almost a general conviction, that it can be done only by a legislative Union.

For my part, I cannot see the measure in any other light than that of being absolutely necessary. It has long been my opinion, and every thing which has happened *in* Ireland, and in respect to Ireland during the last twenty years, particularly that which took place in 1782, and was whimsically enough called "Final Adjustment," have convinced me of that necessity.

When it was found proper to take off the shackles from the Irish Parliament, and highly proper it was, a Union should have been proposed, and by the same measure only should all the commercial and other advantages have been communicated, which were so indiscriminately conceded without terms since 1778. It would have been still better, if an Union had taken place in the beginning of the century, and that the Constitution and Commerce of Great Britain, which had been so long and so invidiously withheld, had been then communicated to Ireland

land. But in 1782, the administration of that day, without supplying any means of keeping these kingdoms together, rashly gave away the dependence of the two islands on each other; and now there is no certainty in the connexion of Great Britain and Ireland. Independance of Legislature seems to have suggested notions of separation, which appeared, in some degree, as early as 1784. However, even those who attempt to justify what was done in 1782, must acknowledge, that there were points of essential consequence left unsettled, and that it should not have been postponed to the hour of difficulty and distress to arrange and ascertain the relative exertions and political connexions of the two countries.

Much has been said on the words " Final Adjustment : " but that which is so called, only referred to the then asserted independence of Parliament, and by no means precluded Union: on the contrary, it was the opinion at the time, that *farther* measures were necessary to establish a connexion on a solid and permanent basis: and so far as I understand what was intended, I consider *that* adjustment as putting the Irish Parliament on the footing of independence and free deliberation, and in that situation alone which could satisfy the people of Ireland, that the acts of their Parliament would be thenceforward

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free and uncontrouled; but at any rate it is trifling to suppose, that nothing more was to be attempted, if that which had been done had not the effect of preserving the connexion and attachment of the two countries. It is true that Union became more necessary, as well as more difficult, in consequence of what was done in 1782, and also in 1793, when the principle of our navigation and colonial laws were, without terms or occasion, sacrificed by the act which permits goods and commodities of the growth, production, or manufacture, of Asia, Africa, or America, to be imported from Ireland into Great Britain. All these benefits should have been reserved as the means of Union, but being then unconditionally granted, they have rendered that measure much less sought for by Ireland; and I confess that the strongest objection I felt to the propositions that were brought forward in the British Parliament in 1785, (which by no means would have done what it is necessary to do,) arose from the apprehension, that if carried, they might prevent an Union. It was obvious, that if all the reserved advantages of Great Britain were to be given up, there would be no means of future negotiation remaining.

Previously to that period, Ireland would have petitioned for an Union, and I think she might well do so now as the greatest possible acquisition she could make; but neither the adjust-

ment in question, nor all the commercial concessions, nor other means employed to tranquilize that country, have had the least effect. The bad state of Ireland yearly became worse. It appears the parties are not to be satisfied; that no melioration of the condition of Ireland has taken place; that a great proportion of the people is now as ill disposed to Government, as bigoted, as ignorant, and as uncivilized as they were at the time of the massacre in 1641. At present the permanency of the connexion of Great Britain with Ireland depends on the parties which exist, and ever must exist, in a nation of Protestants and Roman Catholics so peculiarly interested against, and politically hostile to each other. These divisions are the bane of the country, never to be annihilated but by a legislative Union. The whole present system is bad. The change of Government, at least every four years, and the concessions so regularly made under the vain notion of satisfying the people, create and promote schemes and suggestions inconsistent with the tranquillity of the country, and encourage agitators, whose uniform object it is, to disturb the public mind.

I have observed, that independence of Parliament suggested the idea of separation. Irrational notions of independence, leading to dissolution of Government, must end in civil war and the introduction of the French. Manufactures

tures and agriculture would then cease much more suddenly than they could possibly revive; and whatever might be the event, Ireland would be completely ruined, and England greatly distressed. But supposing the crisis in question should not immediately come on, Ireland would continue in its present disturbed state, and England would ever find Ireland the back door to conspiracy, rebellion, and invasion. And so miserably distracted is Ireland at present, that among three millions of Roman Catholics, and half a million of Dissenters, there is scarcely a man capable of a political idea, who does not wish for something different from that which is; namely, a Change of the Church Establishment, the Abolition of Tithes, a Parliamentary Reform, or a Republic: nor are the members of the established Church entirely free from the same unhappy temper of mind. The common enemies of mankind will not fail to take advantage of this state of things: they have raised it into a dangerous and formidable conspiracy, and it seems the only means through which they can hope of succeeding in their favourite plan of destroying the British empire.

Nothing can be more dangerous than a notion, that a coalition of Churchmen, Dissenters, and Catholics, for the purpose of separation, cannot take place. The reports of the Lords and Commons of Ireland, and what has happened

pened lately, completely prove, that such a coalition is not merely possible, but that it actually exists, and that the foundations of it are laid, and deeply laid, already.

This subject has been so fully and so ably discussed, that it is not necessary to state how general, how great, and how irremediable by common means, are the mischief and danger: the unexampled perilous state of Ireland is well known; it was therefore evidently the duty of His Majesty's Ministers to bring forward some measure to prevent even the possibility of so great a calamity as the separation of the two countries; and however I may differ in opinion with His Majesty's Ministers in respect to the conduct of this business, I acknowledge great merit in their undertaking such an arduous task at a time they were so fully engaged in the most momentous concerns, and in their not shrinking from the difficulties which obviously might present themselves, and which too often induce Ministers to adopt some temporary expedient (just to serve their turn) which never effectually succeeds, but in the end produces greater difficulty and much mischief. It seems also highly incumbent on the British Parliament to take early the most effectual steps to promote the proper remedy: and every thing has been tried, except that which is now obviously the best and only means, an Union, and which, in consequence

quence of the wild opinions that are abroad, and the disturbed state of the world, has become still more necessary. Every concession has been made, many colonial and commercial advantages, which Ireland could not on any reasonable ground claim without an Union, have been communicated to her: in short, every thing has been granted so far, that we are now told by the enemies of Union, Ireland cannot acquire more by that measure, and that she does not desire greater freedom and extension of trade, than she at present possesses, preferring her independence and dignity as a nation. They surely have odd notions of independence and dignity who prefer holding almost the whole of their trade, almost their existence at the discretion of another country, rather than by *right* as a part of that country.

But I should not do justice if I did not acknowledge this way of thinking is by no means general, and that the two largest counties, Cork and Galway, and the city of Cork, county of Clare, and other districts of Ireland, had expressed the contrary, and so well, that I wish to make use of their own words. Speaking of Union, the county of Cork says:

County of Cork. { We are firmly persuaded it would add to the welfare, the credit, and the immediate prosperity of Ireland, and that by the uniting our strength in the closest manner with the most free, and most happy people on earth, we should exert the best possible means in our power for preserving the safety, the honour, and the security of our dearest rights. Determined, therefore, as we are to stand or fall with Great Britain, we look forward with
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the greatest anxiety to this connexion, as the most effectual means of putting an end to all our factions and religious animosities, and of reconciling the people of Ireland to each other, by doing away all ill-founded jealousies between fellow-subjects.

We consider it as most obviously and indispensably necessary to the prosperity of this kingdom in general, and to the restoration of that tranquillity and industry, which alone can render the inhabitant prosperous and happy, and most likely in its consequences to reclaim the deluded people from those habits of violence and outrage to a sense of their duty to the laws of their country, and the best of Kings.

City of Cork. { To become a constituent part of that empire, to whose protection we owe our political existence, and whose Constitution is the admiration of the civilized world: to participate in those resources, which are inexhaustible: to become joint proprietors of that navy, which is irresistible, and to share in that commerce which knows no bounds, are objects beyond which our most sanguine wishes for the prosperity of Ireland cannot possibly extend: while the prospect, which they hold forth of terminating the jarring interest of party, and reconciling the jealous distinctions of religion, promises a restoration of that tranquillity to which this country has been too long a stranger.

County of Galway. { We are persuaded, that a legislative Union with Great Britain, established on terms of perfect equality, would invigorate the resources, increase the wealth, and add materially to the security of both countries, enabling them to oppose their common enemy with increased strength and power, and most effectually to defeat their object of dividing the empire for the purpose of subduing it. To consider this measure as it affects either country separately, we conceive to be a narrow view of its object: but even in that confined sense of it, we are firmly convinced it would add to the welfare, the credit, and the immediate prosperity of Ireland: and we are of opinion, that uniting our strength in the closest manner with the wisest, the freest, and the happiest people upon earth, with whom we must necessarily stand or fall, is so far from a sacrifice of the honour and independence of Ireland, that it is the best means left to us for preserving both.

These addresses are most respectably signed; and a third address from the county of Cork, nearly

nearly in the same words, has the signature of 373 of the principal Nobility, Bishops, Magistrates, Clergy, and persons of property, both Protestants and Catholics : and there is reason to believe, that the sentiments therein expressed are much more general in the several counties which have not addressed than has been supposed.

Although Ireland has acquired much which should only have been conceded by Union, it is not true that she cannot obtain farther commercial advantages by that measure. The best market, that of Great Britain, for all Irish manufactures, is still reserved, except linens, and her linens are become one of the greatest manufactures in the world, entirely in consequence of having that market, and could never have been carried on to its present great extent, unless aided by the prompt payment of Great Britain, which in a great degree acts as a supply of capital *

Six

* The bounties on the export of Irish linens from hence at the same time that they gave to Great Britain about an eighth of the trade in those articles, encourage the manufacture in Ireland. The average of bounties on the export of linens for the last four years is nearly 34,700l.

Irish linens exported from Great Britain on an	Yards
average of the last four years, entitled to bounty	4,866,015
Ditto not entitled to bounty	964,507
Total of Irish linens exported from Great Britain	5,830,522

The

Six parts in seven of the whole exports of linen from Ireland are imported into Great Britain, and of the seventh part the greatest proportion goes to America, including the West Indies. On an average of four years, ending the 25th of March 1798,

	Yards
were exported from Ireland	39,885,776
of which to Great Britain	33,695,659
To the British Colonies in America and Islands in the West Indies *	1,285,998
To the States of America	4,012,519
To foreign parts of Europe and to Africa	891,530

being about a 44th part of the whole export of linens from Ireland.

Linens are the only Irish manufacture properly so called, which has the advantage of the British market, and it has flourished accord-

The duties laid on the import of foreign linens for the purpose of protecting the British linen manufacture are about 25 per cent. of their real value, and give almost the monopoly of the British market to many articles of the Irish linen manufacture. The duties paid on foreign linen used in this country, on the same average, amount to 115,000. If the same rate of duties had been laid on Irish linens imported and used in this island under the usual policy of protecting the British manufacture, as is done in all like cases, it would raise a revenue of about 650,000.

* In this are not included Irish linens exported from Great Britain to the British Colonies and to the American States, but only the quantities sent directly from Ireland to the places mentioned.

ingly.

ingly. No manufacture, no trade of Ireland, except such as are duty free, or have particular advantages in the British market, have succeeded. Linens, corn, and the produce of cattle, which alone have those advantages, amount on an average of the last three years to 5,410,825 when the total value of all Irish imports into Great Britain were 5,612,689 of which there were articles not the manufacture and produce of Ireland to the amount of 101,864

So that the articles of Irish growth or manufacture, which are not duty free, or have no particular exemption or advantage in British ports, amount only to 100,781 and form a small proportion, indeed, of the great importation from Ireland into Great Britain alone amounting to 5,612,689, which, stated in the manner most favourable to Ireland, is, at least, six parts in seven of the whole export trade of Ireland to all parts.

We cannot be surprised, that wollen and other manufactures have decreased in Ireland during the late turbulent state of that country. We may rather wonder, that they have not been more affected; but such articles as have the peculiar

culiar advantage of the British market, have even lately increased. The manufactures and commerce of Ireland are now, and have always been, greatly inferior to what they may be ; it is reasonable therefore to suppose, that when the present prohibitory duties which were laid on manufactures coming from all parts to protect those of England, are, in respect to Irish manufactures, equalized, as intended by the articles of Union, and they shall have the advantage of the British market the same as linens ; the produce of cattle and corn, they may also flourish.

No country is better circumstanced for manufactures than Ireland. She has plenty of water and fuel *, the first requisites in manufactures. The encouragement to her industry will be great, especially as it will be impossible to countervail the difference of price of labour and

* Most parts of Ireland, where, through want of skill and wealth, coals have not yet been raised, particularly the manufacturing districts, are accessible by water, and near the coasts of England and Wales, which abound in coals. Ireland may have that article cheaper from the West and North-West of England and from Wales, than it can go coastwise to many places in Great Britain where great manufactories are carried on which consume large quantities of that article. Coals from Great Britain to Ireland pay only an export duty of 14d. per chaldron, when the same article carried coastwise to London pays a duty of 9s. 3d per chaldron, and to any other part of England 5s. 9d. If Ireland does not think it necessary to protect her own collieries by any import duty, she may cheapen the price of coals to her manufacturers by taking off the duty of 1s. 9d. per ton on the import of that article into Dublin, and of 9d. into

and of excises in the two countries *, and commercial men will acknowledge the superior advantage of a near market, and a quick return, so absolutely necessary to a country wanting capital.

If Union should take place, there will be no jealousy, no warfare of bounties and drawbacks, no invidious wish to check the prosperity of Ireland, or any manufacture there, and the great commercial advantages of Ireland will no longer be held at the pleasure of another country.

The prosperity of Ireland, such as it is, in no degree arose from the independency of the Irish Parliament, but from commercial advantages derived from great Britain. I hesitated when I first heard that a contrary opinion came from a man as able, as respectable, and at least, as well informed, as any in the two islands—but the assertion that the prosperity of Ireland arose from the independence of her Parliament, appears to me so entirely unsupported by fact, that I scarcely know how to reason about it, except by asking, whether the increase of the linen manufac-

into all other parts of Ireland. The passage from the English collieries is short, and the freight is moderate. And it may be observed, that inferior sorts of coals answer the purpose of manufacture, and that the bogs of Ireland furnish plenty of excellent peat or turf.

* Import duties in the two countries may be equalized, or the difference of those duties on raw materials may be paid on import of the article or manufacture, of which it is made.

ture ; whether the prosperity of the beef, pork, and butter-trade ; whether the growth of a grain of corn, or a blade of grass ; whether the opening of the ports of Great Britain to Irish corn at a lower price than from other countries, have been affected by the independence of the Irish Parliament : in short, which article of growth or export has increased in consequence of it ? Have the laws been better executed ? Has the country been more tranquil ? Are life and property more safe ? In truth, I can trace little to that event but the present disturbed state of Ireland. I repeat, that the prosperity of Ireland entirely depends on the connexion with and advantages derived from Great Britain, without which her trade would be almost nothing—and this appears so perfectly evident, that I consider it not to be necessary to add a syllable more to prove it.

When Ireland has acquired the British Constitution, a due execution of laws and tranquillity, and that life and property are secure there, English capitals will undoubtedly be employed in Ireland, and then her prosperity will be real and permanent. At present no prudent man will lend one shilling to that country in any shape, far less will a commercial or manufacturing man risk his capital in any speculation, where a spirit of unfriendly independence, of separation and of rebellion so strongly prevails—but surely it is not commercial

commercial advantage and wealth only that are wanting to Ireland. She is deficient in the most essential of all things, good order and well-executed laws. Life and property are not more secure there, than among the most disturbed people upon earth. A residence there is as much to be avoided as in countries subject to the most hideous tyranny or savage banditti.

It is curious, especially at this time, that apprehensions are expressed that the number of absentees will be greatly increased by an Union. There are now infinitely a greater number of Irish emigrants, for the sake of personal safety, than will be occasioned if a Union should be adopted. If that measure should take place, few families will follow those who are called to Parliament: if they make the experiment, the difference of expence will soon check the evil: and those that occasionally become absentees, will be so by choice, not by compulsion.

It will not be improper in this place to state, with the view of removing wrong impressions, that the number and property of absentees have been always greatly exaggerated, and also the bad effects of the consequent drain of money.

Those who are most capable of examining the question agree, that the remittance to regular absentees

absentees is below 600,000l., I believe considerably, which is not more than one-fifth of the value of the exports of linens alone to this country, amounting to, at least, three millions. According to the common valuation, it may not always appear so much, because they are rated, at most, at 1s. 6d. per yard, even now that their quality is much improved; but if valued at only 19d., linen and linen yarn will, on an average of the last three years, amount to a larger sum than I have mentioned, and more than balance all the imports of Great Britain—including raw materials, as well as remittances to absentees. The imports of the product and manufacture of Ireland into Great Britain on an average of the last three years,

being	-	-	-	5,510,825
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and all imports of the produce or manufacture of Great Britain into Ireland	-	-	-	2,087,672
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3,425,153

So that there is a balance of upwards of 2,800,000 in favour of Ireland, allowing an actual remittance of 600,000l. to absentees.

The above is the statement of the interchange of produce and manufacture. Besides which, Ireland imports from Great Britain at present, in

in consequence of her being obliged to avail herself of British capital, and of her limited commerce, except with Great Britain,

Of colonial articles - 970,000

Of foreign merchandize - 498,173

1,468,173

And England receives from Ireland

of colonial and foreign merchan-

dize 101,874

which gives a balance to England on

foreign and colonial importation

of 1,366,309

and if deducted from the above balance of 2,800,000, will still on the whole, stating the trade and remittances in the most favourable manner for Ireland, leave a balance of 1,433,691. in favour of the latter country.

It should be observed, that while the imports of the produce and manufacture of Ireland into Great Britain are in a progressive state of certain increase, on the other hand, the imports of foreign and colonial articles from Great Britain into Ireland are in a course of decrease; but I proceed to considerations of more consequence to both countries.

I am little disposed to argue in favour of non-residence, but I must observe, that those parts of Ireland,

Ireland, as well as of England, where manufactures flourish, are remarkable for the non-residence of land proprietors. Yet, in general, I consider their absence as the greatest misfortune, and I conceive one of the most essential advantages of England over Ireland arises from the residence of that class of men, and from their great attention to the people, and to all the details of the country round them. In Ireland, the intermediate man, a person between the owner and occupier, who holds land from the resident, as well as from the absentee, has no permanent interest in the improvement of it.—His income depends on the exaction of the utmost, that can be got from an under tenant for the land, and to this circumstance much of the unimproved State of Ireland may be attributed. But we cannot be surprized, that men of fortune in Ireland should now reside in villas near the metropolis, or absent themselves, when we recollect the uncivilized state of the country. At present it cannot be expected from them, nor is it safe, and unless some great change should happen, which will induce and enable men of fortune to live there, and to instruct, protect, and encourage the people, civilization will go on very slowly.

All the same objections which are urged in Ireland against an Union, were made by Scotland

land at the time of her Union with England, and every mischief was predicted, but they all proved unfounded. Arguments, which came from some of the ablest men of those times, and which then appeared almost conclusive, are completely refuted by experience. It was said, that Edinburgh would be deserted and ruined: the same is now said of Dublin: but since Union, the size of Edinburgh, and the number of her inhabitants, have been more than doubled, and the city beautified in a high degree. All Scotland is greatly improved, her population increased, she is ten times more rich since that period: her people are civilized, the laws are now executed, life and property are secure; the Legislatures of the two kingdoms no longer at variance as heretofore, and at the risk of rupture each counteracting the other. Few families of property are now constantly absentees, and almost without exception, those Scotchmen, who go from home and acquire a fortune, in the end carry it to Scotland. Before the Union, Scotland had scarcely any thing worthy the name of a manufacture: all her efforts to obtain a foreign or colonial trade had failed, but now her manufactures and trade are as great in proportion as those of England. And all these advantages are greatly beyond the progressive improvement which would have taken place with-

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out an Union, and without which many of them never could have taken place.

The alarm in the city of Dublin on the subject of Union is said to be greater and more just than elsewhere, but I am perfectly satisfied that her apprehensions are unfounded. The absence of 80 Commoners and 30 Lords, even supposing them constantly resident before, certainly cannot ruin Dublin. The Lord Lieutenant, the principal officers of every kind, the Courts of Justice will still remain. She will still continue the Winter residence of the principal people of fortune, as Edinburgh does. She will be the seat of education, of amusement, and of the arts. Her trade will increase greatly. The complete intercourse and exchange of commodities which will be established by an Union, will raise her commerce beyond what the most sanguine man has ever yet imagined. Cork, Waterford, and Limerick, will have a great proportion of the provision and other trade ; but Dublin will be the great mart for the import and export, particularly of manufactures. Dublin will have the great trade to the most thriving port, perhaps, in the world ; I mean Liverpool. The trade of Ireland with England will be carried on with most security, especially in time of war, between those ports. Every article of foreign and British manufacture and produce

produce which Ireland does not furnish or import immediately from the place of growth or of manufacture, she may have from thence. Almost all the widely-extended inland navigation of England points to Liverpool, and may supply what is wanted to advantage. As Ireland imports but a small proportion of her consumption of West-India articles directly from the place of growth, Dublin is well situated for supplies of those articles from Bristol and Liverpool in return for her exports to those places. The corn trade will become a prodigious article, if the produce of the two islands should by an Union be put on the same footing as between two counties in England. The great inland navigations of Ireland will convey corn at a cheaper rate to Dublin, even from Limerick and Connaught, much cheaper than by a circuitous and precarious voyage by sea. The canal tolls on corn and flour should, in favour of Dublin, be purchased at the public expence, or greatly reduced; and the same should be done in respect to the docks in the port of Dublin. This would facilitate the intercourse between the two countries, and be a mutual advantage to them both; and would ultimately benefit Dublin much more than the residence of those who would be sent to the united Parliament. Dublin would become the warehouse of the corn of

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that kingdom for the steady and certain corn markets of the North-west of Great Britain and the North of Ireland, where a very small part of the consumption of the inhabitants can possibly be grown. The English farmer may at first be alarmed, when he hears, that Ireland will be considered as part of England in respect to the corn-trade; but the advantages will be reciprocal, and the effect, which some may apprehend from an influx of corn more than sufficient, cannot take place. Unfortunately we constantly import as much oats as Ireland can spare at any time, at present double the quantity, and that evil is increasing rather than decreasing. She is well situated to furnish that part of Great Britain, which will always require a supply of that kind of corn, and the quantity of wheat she is ever likely to spare will not be sufficient to overload the British markets. It will be much less mischievous to the growers of wheat in England to have the ports regularly and constantly open to the limited quantity that can come from Ireland, than to have them open to a glut of corn from all parts of the world for three months certain; the moment the smallest proportion of the consumption of this country is wanting, the moment its price becomes what is by no means extravagant, but on the contrary, while it is moderate, considering the increased expence of tillage. The opening of our ports for three months certain to all the world, when

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we only want a moderate quantity, may reduce the price of wheat ruinously low; but the comparatively small quantity that could come from Ireland, would have no farther effect than supplying what may be actually wanted. When Ireland has a constantly open market in Great Britain for corn, it will prove the greatest encouragement to her farmers to change their slovenly management. At present their corn is exported in so bad a state, that it must meet the corn of other countries at market to great disadvantage. When they have a steady market, they will soon find the necessity of preparing and dressing their corn in a manner that will enable it to bear a competition with the corn of England.

It has been suggested, that the manufactures of Ireland, and particularly the linen trade, would suffer through the want of a resident Parliament. The principal manufactures and commerce of Scotland are situated at a greater distance from London than those of Ireland, and they became what they are since the Union of the Parliaments; yet there has never been the slightest complaint in respect to necessary protection and assistance from the British Parliament: and perhaps it may not improperly be observed in this place, that no disadvantage whatever has arisen to the affairs of Scotland in consequence of her having only forty-five Members

Members in the British Parliament, but they have been as well attended to and as well managed as those of England by upwards of five hundred Members, and the government of Scotland has been administered since Union as vigilantly and more impartially than before, and the same, in all probability, will be the case in respect to Ireland.

The objection to Union on the part of the Protestants of Ireland is unaccountable: they can hardly be said to constitute a nation: they are an English colony governing upwards of three millions of Roman Catholics, or, at least, six times their own number in a country acquired and maintained by English arms and treasure, which colony never could have supported itself; and even the last Summer would have been overwhelmed, unless protected by the same means by English power. They cannot disdain that description; many of them, I am sure, are sensible, that such is their situation, and that their consequence and security depend on the connexion with the Mother Country. In respect to the Roman Catholics, Union alone can make it safe to satisfy their claims. By Union, all that enmity, jealousy, and contrariety of interest, which naturally arise between those two unequal bodies, must soon cease. The Protestants will lose nothing; I am satisfied their object was not monopoly, but safety: they will be safe, and relieved from all apprehensions, and may have a better

better tenantry, and more attached to their interest. The Roman Catholics may acquire all they can desire; and I hope we shall never again hear of Protestant ascendancy or Catholic emancipation, words which have been very insidiously employed to the worst purposes. On cool reflexion it will appear, that Ireland will not incur any disadvantage, but the advantages to be gained by her are the greatest that can be conceived, and, in the first place, security and tranquillity, as it is reasonable to suppose, that an identity of Constitution and a due execution of the Laws, will produce the same effects in Ireland as they have done in Great Britain, and particularly in Scotland within this century. Till Union takes place, and not till then, will the theoretical independence of Ireland become practical. Ireland, in truth, is now actually dependent on England through her divisions, through her trade, and through her Constitution. Either the Protestants or the Catholics will depend on English support. It has been shewn, that the trade of Ireland is absolutely dependent on that of England; and the King of Great Britain being subject to British laws, in obeying him, and under the necessary controul of his Ministers, Ireland must in some sort be dependent: but supposing two perfectly independent Legislatures within the same empire, they must always be considered as in an uncertain and perilous state, mutually inconvenient to each other, and always cherishing discontent
and

and jealousy. If one Parliament exerts powers in opposition to those of the other, what must be the consequences? They are so obvious, that it would be an abuse of time to state them. We cannot reflect with much satisfaction on the only two instances which have occurred since the independence of the Irish Legislature, wherein the two Parliaments could act oppositely to each other. The rejection of the commercial propositions in 1785, on the part of Ireland, has not obtained the applause, even in that country, of the well-informed, and the conduct which was held on the occasion of appointing a Regency evinced a disposition to risk the mischiefs which might be expected to arise from the clashing of two independent parliaments. In short, if the sort of independence which is claimed has any meaning, it leads to separation—Union or separation must take place; for it seems agreed on all sides, that the countries cannot go on as they are.

Soon after the accession of James the First to the Thrones of these kingdoms, that wise Statesman and Counsellor, Sir Francis Bacon, strongly recommended an Union between England and Scotland. He clearly saw how faulty and precarious the fortunate junction of the two countries would be, if only supported by the circumstances of having the same King. He proposed a complete Union. He recommended highly the liberal system of the Romans, observing that the nations

that had a single king, and a single legislature, and a single independence in 1782, has

talizations were, in effect, perpetual mixtures,
 not only with persons, but with cities and coun-
 tries; and adds, that there never were any States
 that were good commixtures but the Romans.
 He also observes, that the conduct of other
 kingdoms has been different; and consequently
 the addition of farther empire and territory
 has been rather a matter of burden than of
 strength, and kept alive the seeds of revolt and
 rebellion for many ages. And he adds, that Ar-
 ragon was united to Castile by a marriage; but
 after an hundred years, a civil war commenced
 in consequence of the bad policy of not incorpo-
 rating, but leaving it a separate Government;
 and if he had lived as late as these times, he
 might have stated much stronger cases. Ma-
 chiavel also attributes the growth of the Roman
 Empire to the good policy in incorporating so
 easily with strangers; and Molyneux, the strenu-
 ous assertor of the independence of the Irish par-
 liament, says, an Union on equal terms would
 be highly advantageous to Ireland, and the best
 means of enjoying that independence; and the
 Irish parliament, in the beginning of this century,
 expressed a desire for an entire Union. But the
 times were not so enlightened as they now are,
 and a narrow policy prevented the participation
 of those liberal, fair, and equal terms, which
 are now offered to Ireland. The present Chief
 Baron of Ireland, one of the first constitutional
 authorities of that kingdom, and a successful
 supporter of the Irish independence in 1782, has
 F asserted

asserted, that the independence of the Irish parliament was most valuable, because it would enable Ireland to treat for a Union upon fair terms.

The Union of Wales and Scotland with England, the Union of Bretagne, Dauphiny, and other provinces with France, the Union of the several kingdoms of Spain, all of which, while independent, were greatly prejudicial to each other, proved highly advantageous to the different countries and to the empires, in proportion to the completeness of legislative Union that took place; and the sensible Americans soon discovered how dangerous their situation would be, if they remained separate independent States.

Every advantage that was expected, and more than was expected, has been derived from the Union of Scotland. No country was ever more disturbed before and at the time. Nothing could tend more directly to separation than the act of security which passed in the parliament of Scotland just before that event: a great proportion of the people of all ranks were as ill-disposed towards England as the worst disposed of the Irish. The Clans were as much out of the reach of the law as any part of Ireland can be supposed to be. To carry fire and sword from one district into another was as much the disposition of the Highlanders, as it has been lately of White-boys and Defenders in Ireland. The taste and fashion of the

the people were to be in a situation to counter hostilities, and the chief men of the country instead of endeavouring to excite the industry of their dependants, only valued themselves in proportion to the number of those who were disposed to follow them in arms. Notwithstanding the Crowns of the two kingdoms had been annexed above an hundred years, a connexion with France was still kept up, and the most dangerous intrigues carried on. I shall only add, that although the causes or motives were not precisely the same, the effects were; and many other instances of the disorders, and of the resemblance of the situation of Scotland at that time to the present state of Ireland might easily be stated, and that all those circumstances which disturbed Scotland, as much as Ireland now is, have been done away by Union.

Nature has given many local advantages to Ireland. Union will give her a Constitution that is deemed the best; will give her tranquillity, wealth, and character; and money will be lent in Ireland, when settled, with as much confidence as in England. Those who are now absentees would find the advantage of residing there. Englishmen would risk their persons and property in that country, which, if not immediately, will in time, become as civilized as Great Britain.

On the whole, it may be confidently pronounced, Union is most necessary, and will be most beneficial.

cial to Ireland. The plan seems formed for
 liar, although I will not say for her exclusive,
 atage, and as a partial friend I could not pro-
 anything more favourable for her. Yet it by no
 means follows, that the great advantages of
 Union to Ireland will be counterbalanced by
 disadvantages to Great Britain, or that the gain
 of Ireland will be the loss of Great Britain.
 In a long course of years, even if the measure
 of Union should not take place, manufactures
 and trade will decline in some places when they
 redouble from various circumstances in others:
 but possible local disadvantages must not pre-
 vent the Legislature from looking to the gene-
 ral good. It must be admitted, the prosperity
 of Ireland would be the prosperity of Great
 Britain. The inefficient state of a part is a
 great loss to the whole. The unsettled state of
 that country is a general drawback from the
 prosperity of the empire, every part of which
 will find the advantage of that high degree of
 improvement which the assimilation of the two
 countries would effect. Great additional
 strength, and security and general prosperity to
 Great Britain and to the Empire, will be the
 consequence of Union, and the attention of
 the Executive Government would not here-
 after, amidst the distresses of war, and at the
 moment of the utmost peril, be distracted by
 conspiracies and rebellion in Ireland.

Perhaps no circumstance in the character of
 the commercial and manufacturing interests,
 and

and of the people in general in Great Britain, gives a greater proof of their liberality and good sense, than their acquiescence on this occasion in some possible sacrifice of manufactures, of commerce, and of constitution, for the sake of unity and tranquillity of empire: The energies of commerce surpass, and sometimes contradict, the most plausible calculations—and even in a commercial light England might be benefited by a great increase of manufactures and commerce in Ireland, inasmuch as Ireland will be better enabled to pay for the many articles she will continue to take from England. We all know that much commercial advantage cannot be obtained by trading with a nation which is not rich, especially when the produce of the two countries is the same. The interchange of commodities will animate trade; and no intelligent man will say, that the manufactures of England have decreased in consequence of the great increase of manufactures in Scotland. But those who will give themselves the trouble of examining the question will find, that the two countries are mutually benefited by the prosperous state of their respective manufactures and commerce, and that competition encourages skill and industry, and promotes and enforces good regulations, and consequent cheapness of manufacture. In respect to revenue, the empire will be highly benefited—for with the increase of wealth, there will be as great increase in the excise and customs—and when we enumerate the commercial and

and other advantages that would be derived from an Union, we should not forget the mischiefs that would be avoided, and that the final termination of the antient alliances, the connexion, and the intrigues of France with Scotland, and all projects of separation, were at last effected by the Union of Great Britain.

In respect to the incompetence of Parliament, it is difficult to believe that that objection is at this time seriously urged: if it is, it only convinces me there is great want of argument against the measure of Union. The argument would throw us back to first principles; that is, the dissolution of Government, and to that jargon which has nearly ruined Europe. This doctrine was ably refuted at the time of the Union with Scotland; if it had not, it would ill suit the pretensions of Ireland to establish it.

If I should be asked, whether I am satisfied that Union will produce order and steady prosperity in Ireland, I should answer, that I am. The same violence and machinations which exist at present to effect separation might possibly be attempted at first; but when Ireland is irrevocably become a part of Great Britain, there would gradually and soon be an end of speculations and conspiracies. France would no longer speculate on distinct governments and interests. The enemies of order would not be tempted by any prospect of success: they would recollect, that it is not

not Ireland alone, but the three kingdoms, that must be induced to sacrifice or yield their Constitution: and, as was the case in Scotland, when the people of that country, who had been so averse to Union, had tasted the sweets of that measure, they became the most strenuous supporters of it; inasmuch, that when it was the object to raise a rebellion there, it was found that a declaration against Union would be unpopular and hurt the cause.

It may appear extraordinary, that so much should be said in this House to prove the advantage of Union to Ireland; but the arguments are not so misapplied as they may seem to be, they are, in truth, arguments to recommend the laying a proposition before the Irish nation so beneficial, that I cannot doubt but a people of great abilities and capable of discernment, will, when the heat of their alarm has subsided, no longer refuse to take into consideration a plan which may be highly advantageous to every part of the empire; and unless the measure had been ill understood, the unreasonable refusal to listen to any proposition, could not have taken place.

In voting for the resolutions, I do not mean to approve more than the *principle* of Union, to which no adequate objection has been stated. If we should hereafter proceed to details, it will be then necessary to give all our attention, and exert our best powers in examining the articles—and above all, in preventing harm to the Constitution, taking

taking care that we do not, with a levity and submission that seem to belong to the times, do any thing that may be unnecessary for one country, and should be highly dreaded by the other.

There has now been an opportunity of some experience, which is to be hoped will promote the utmost liberality and candour in proposing the measure, whenever the people of Ireland are found to be disposed to accept it. Every man will agree with me in deprecating all idea of force or threats, or the use of any means that are not perfectly fair and honourable.

To render Union satisfactory and permanent, it will not be sufficient that it be merely acceded to by Parliament. The people at large must be reconciled to it; and that they may, is the wish nearest my heart. It is for Ireland that I am most interested on this occasion. Her deplorable condition demands it; for I am most seriously convinced the measure is *absolutely necessary* for her *tranquillity, security, and welfare*. The bad effects of two separate Parliaments within one empire, and the baneful idea of separation, can be done away only by an Union; and until that event takes place, Ireland will never be settled, will always be disturbed by the most mischievous speculations and intrigues, the sport of parties, and of the enemies of England; she will be a weakness as she is at present, instead of a strength to the empire.



Mr. DOBBS's

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S P E E C H

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF

IRELAND.

ON TUESDAY THE 5th, OF MARCH, 1799.

ON SUBMITTING

FIVE PROPOSITIONS

FOR

TRANQUILLIZING THE COUNTRY.

DUBLIN.

PRINTED BY J. MOORE, 45, COLLEGE GREEN.

1799

MR. DOBBS

STEPHEN

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF

THE LAW

ON TUESDAY THE 26th OF MARCH 1793

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OF THE

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FIVE PROPOSITIONS

FOR

TRANSFORMING THE COUNTRY.



PRINTED BY J. MORTIMER, COLLEGE GREEN.

1793

S P E E C H, &c.

S I R,

WHEN I gave notice of the business of this day, I declared I would fully unbosom myself to this house, and I am come prepared to keep my word. The situation of Ireland calls aloud on every honest man to explicitly avow his sentiments; the heart that feels not for our past calamities, and that is not anxious to avert those that are impending, deserves to be silent; and the tongue that dares pronounce what is contrary to the conviction of the mind, ought to be silenced for ever. With these feelings—with these sensations—I have this day entered these walls; and I trust I have left every passion, every prejudice, and every selfish idea behind me.

Sir, I have before declared, that I would move nothing that I conceived inimical to British connexion—to our present form of government—or to the safety of the Protestants of Ireland. British connexion has ever been dear to me for a variety of reasons. It is dear to me because I am sprung from British ancestors; it is dear to me from a similarity of language, laws, and manners; it is dear to me because the mutual interests of both require it should exist; it is dear to me because the British nation stands among the first that have ever appeared in the world. Nothing can make me wish to break off the connexion but British tyranny;

tyranny; let Great Britain and Ireland be forever connected, but not at the expence of Irish independence. Sir, I love the constitution of King, Lords and Commons as fixed under William the 3d. at the glorious revolution of 1688: because for a century from that æra, England enjoyed more happiness and prosperity, than any other nation ancient or modern. I do not prefer that constitution from prejudice, but from reasoning; and as far as I have been able to find from the page of history, it seems to me to be the best result of human wisdom, and its operation the happiest in all political practice. Great abuses have indeed crept in, but I would not for that reason overthrow the constitution, tho' I would do those abuses away. Sir, I am attached to the Protestants, because I am descended from Protestants—because every near relative I have are Protestants—but I am not only attached to the Protestant, but also to the Catholic, and every sect of christianity. And now, Sir, that christianity is attacked on all sides by infidelity, it behoves every man who is a christian, no matter of what denomination, to rally round the standard of the Messiah. This, Sir, is necessary to defeat the propagation of French principles, which threaten to reduce Europe again to the miserable system of Pagan and Heathen philosophy, which threaten to reduce Europe again to those miserable doubts, which the wisest men of antiquity felt as to future rewards and punishments, and as to the immortality of the soul. Cato, the best and wisest of the Romans, could only say “Plato thou reasonest well,” but with the christian it is not reasoning, but certainty. He has a fixed and steady principle of life and action, the most conducive to individual and general happiness; therefore whilst we attend to the Protestants, let us also embrace our Catholic brethren, and unite us all in christian love and benevolence. I have thus explicitly
given

given my reasons for loving the British connexion—the present form of government, and why I will never endanger the Protestants; but how are we to preserve this British connexion—how are we to preserve the constitution—and how are we to secure the Protestants? I will tell you Sir; it is by wise and wholesome laws, that will make the great mass of the People love and respect their government; this is the way to tranquillize Ireland, and this is yet within our power. This will do more to restore Ireland to peace and happiness than one hundred martial laws, and one hundred thousand executions; till such salutary measures are adopted, I, for one, must consider Ireland as a vast slaughter-house, in which 40,000 men of different descriptions, already lie dead, and in which some hundred thousands are devoted to future immolation. I shall perhaps be told of the deep criminality of most of those who are gone, and of most of those who are yet doomed to perish. Sir, I stand not here the advocate of Rebellion, or of guilt; but I beseech the members of this House to take care that they themselves are innocent. If the discontents and rebellion have arisen from an unwise or wicked system of Government, I do not hesitate to say, that all the property that has been destroyed, whether of the Rebel or the Loyalist, lies at the door of the Legislature. If an unwise and wicked system of Government has prevailed, I do not hesitate to say, that every drop of blood that has been shed, whether of the Rebel, or the Loyalist, lies at the door of the Legislature. Now, Sir, can any man doubt, whether this country has been governed unwisely or wickedly? Were I a stranger to this land, and had the reports of the two secret Committees of the last sessions put into my hands, I would ask no other evidence of injudicious Government. What do we find there? a conspiracy of near 300,000 fighting men

men in three Provinces, in military organization, and sworn to overthrow the Constitution. It is now well known, that Connaught was as deeply engaged in the conspiracy, tho' not then so forward. Can any evidence be stronger of bad Government, that than 400,000 men able to bear arms out of a population of four millions, or four millions and a half, should solemnly bind themselves to overthrow it. But, Sir, we have it from the first authority, that our Legislature has been corrupt and abominable. We have it from the British Minister, and we have it from the Castle Pamphleteer. Can any man doubt, that we ought to rescue ourselves from this degraded situation? Can any man doubt that we ought to shew the British minister, that this House, is worthy of the confidence of the Irish Nation. Can any man doubt but that we ought to enquire as to every abuse, and every grievance, and do them away. Sir, I call on the House of Commons of Ireland, to awake from its slumber, and work while it is day. I call on the House of Commons of Ireland to awake, and not wait to be aroused by the crush of the Constitution. I call on the House of Commons of Ireland to awake, and contemplate the mighty scenes that are passing around them. Do you believe the present convulsions of civilized Europe, are owing to the mere machinations of men? No, it is the hand of God visiting the bad Governments of the world. France is permitted to be a scourge to herself, and to others, because her Government was tyrannic and corrupt, and because her Nobles, her Gentry and her dignified Clergy disgraced and abused their elevated situations. What was it destroyed Holland? That base love of money, which made every man of consequence consider himself, and abolished all their former love of virtue and of freedom? What was it destroyed the different Italian states but their tyranny and their vices? What is it, that is paying the way;

way, to revolutionize Spain and Portugal, but their pernicious systems of Government. I say again to the Irish House of Commons awake, and remove every thing that is justly obnoxious, or you perish: and I call upon the Nobles, the Gentry, and the Clergy to avert their own ruin by the practice of every public, and of every private virtue.

Sir, there are but two lines of conduct for us to pursue: the one is a system of conciliation, with a strong executive power to give time for wholesome laws, and wholesome measures to operate. The other is force alone. If the former be pursued, I would answer with my life, that the termination will be happy. If the latter, I know not the consequence. Your military are made up of different descriptions: can we answer for the steadiness of all? Have we calculated, what might be the consequence of a powerful descent from France? But I will suppose the military steady, the French baffled, and the Rebels defeated; the bayonet will not alter the human mind, and you must go into a war of extermination: and if you do, is it not inevitable ruin; what would remain after the conflict, an Island inhabited by old men, women and children; an Island with its houses destroyed, and its fields desolated; an Island with the remnant of its gentry and its People involved in one common beggary; an Island, more gifted from nature, than perhaps any other spot on the habitable globe, exhibiting an awful monument of the consequences of sanguinary injustice, of national distraction, and of national folly.

Sir, before I go into the specific system, that in my opinion would tranquillize Ireland, I think it necessary to declare, that I give up for the present all idea of external Parliamentary reform Parliamentary reform has been an object dear to me from the first moment I ever thought of Politics, and in happier times would be again my object.
But

But from the peculiar situation of Ireland, one fourth of her inhabitants only being Protestants, and the rest Catholics, I see its impracticability, till the Protestants almost individually feel that a prudent reform might be made consistent with their security; having thus given up external reform for the present, the internal becomes the more necessary. I have no objection to the fair patronage of the crown, in disposing of the military and naval appointments; I have no objection to the fair patronage of the crown in disposing of the dignities of the church, and of every necessary office in the state; and this is a sufficient patronage for every wholesome purpose. But, Sir, I am the avowed enemy to that extent of patronage, that enables the minister to corrupt the Legislature. I shall not say a word, Sir, of the present house of commons, for that I know would be unparliamentary; but I may declare with Mr. Pitt, and the Castle Pamphlet, that Great Britain has governed Ireland prior to the election of the present house of Commons, by corrupting our Parliament: In order therefore, to take away at least, a part of the means of corrupting it in future, one of the resolutions, I shall presently propose to you will be, that it is the opinion of this house that all sinecure places should be abolished, compensation being made to their present possessors.

Sir, I have said that the abolition of sinecure places, would in part take away the means of corruption, but that alone will not be sufficient; from the moment Ireland obtained her independence in 1782, the English ministry resolved, and it is now openly and barefacedly acknowledged, to govern Ireland as they pleased through the medium of corruption; in pursuance of this plan, several new places have been created since that period; it might perhaps be the best way to abolish them also, but as that might lead to an argument as to their utility, I shall only submit a resolution to the house, that it is the opinion of

of this house, that no man should in future sit in it, who holds any office created since the year 1782.

I shall now call the attention of the house to what remains to be given to the Catholics; their Peers are at present precluded from sitting in Parliament, because their consciences will not permit them to take the oath prescribed by law; for the same reason none can become members of this house: and there are certain offices in the state, from which they are precluded by act of Parliament. It will I am sure be admitted that nothing but the most absolute necessity can warrant any man to inflict restriction or penalty on another on account of religion; now is there any man in this house who, on serious reflection, will get up and say, there could be danger to the Protestants, or to the state, whilst parliament remains constituted as it is, by giving what is now withheld from the Catholics: let us suppose these restrictions done away; what is to follow,—eight or ten Catholic Peers would take their places in the house of Lords, which now consists of about 180, including the Bishops; how are the number of Catholic Peers to be increased? only by new creations made by a Protestant King: and is there any man who will suppose that a Protestant King will ever make such a creation of Catholic Peers, as will give them a preponderancy in the upper house of Parliament? In regard to this house, what is the fact; who sends the county members? the landlords of Ireland? who are the landlords of Ireland? Protestants, with a few exceptions. In whose hands are the boroughs? entirely in the hands of Protestants, two or three cities, and a few towns, may perhaps be nearly divided, or perhaps the ballance of property may be in favour of the Catholics; but can any rational man have a serious alarm of any preponderance of Catholics in the Irish house of Commons, in the way members are now returned? I am persuaded, there is no rational

tional man has such an idea : some Catholics of property would no doubt, find their way here; and I for one, shall be most heartily glad to see them. Let us next enquire if any mischief could arise from their being allowed to fill the places from which they are at present precluded; who appoints to these places? the king. Will any man seriously say, he is afraid of the safety of the state if we should allow Catholics to occupy the higher offices? Will any man suppose that a Protestant King will ever appoint a Catholic to one of them, unless he be distinguished for his knowledge, his abilities, and his virtues? and if he be so distinguished, on what principle should he be prevented? Sir, I should be glad to see the King raising men of such a description, no matter of what sect, to the highest offices; I should be glad to see the King raising Catholics of integrity and sufficient property to the Peerage: I wish for every thing that will blend the inhabitants of Ireland into one people: whilst enmity remains between the Protestants and Catholics, Ireland can never be a great, a happy, or a prosperous nation. And therefore, Sir, the third resolution I shall submit to the house will be this; that it is the opinion of this house, that full Catholic Emancipation may be safely given, provided the present mode of returning members to the house of Commons shall continue, till time shall evince to every thinking Protestant, that they will have nothing to fear from a prudent reform in Parliament.

Sir, the next thing I shall call the attention of the house to, is tithes; a subject on which men's minds are more agreed than perhaps on any other: almost every man in the nation is against the payment of tithes unless it be to the established clergy, the tithe Proctors, and some of the landed gentlemen, who pay next to nothing, because the clergy find it necessary to have their aid to enable them to collect from their peasantry: from the earliest period of my recollection

recollection, tithes have been the subject of general discontent; they chiefly gave birth to the white boys of the south, and the hearts of oak, and hearts of steel of the north: ask the quaker what he thinks of tithes? he tells you, he cannot pay them, because he thinks it contrary to christianity, and many of them have evinced their sincerity, by even going to jail; ask those who are of the established religion of the country, what they think of them; and you will be answered almost to a man, that they feel it unjust, that they should expend all that is done in improvement, and that he who expends nothing is entitled to a tenth of the benefit: ask of the Catholics and the different dissenters, they will give you the same reason of those of the establishment, but with this strong additional one, that it is unjust that they should be compelled to pay a clergyman they never hear, whom they do not acknowledge, and from whom they can receive no possible benefit. Sir, I happen to be of the established religion, but if I were not, I say I would feel the payment of two clergy a grievance. There are certain things that every man, in certain situations must feel to be grievances, and that Government is highly culpable, and highly unwise, that does not do them away. Sir, I am not adverse to a fair and liberal payment of the Clergy, but I want it by a mode that will make the teacher, and those who are able to be taught, in friendship with one another. If the Devil had been consulted how the Clergy should be rendered useless, I think it was by paying them with tithes. But if tithes were even the best mode that could have been adopted, the universal dislike of them should induce a wise Legislature to alter them. A wise Legislature will for ever consult the temper, and wishes of the People it has to govern, and as far as it is possible, will gratify those wishes. But it will be asked what is to be substituted? It is not necessary to go into detail,

detail, as that will belong to the House in Committee; but if we agree to the principle, there can be no doubt, that means can be found, to carry the resolution into effect. I will just suppose for a moment, that tithes should be changed into a rent, to which the lands should be for ever liable, subject to rise and fall at the end of 21 years, or some other period to be fixed on, according to the then average price of grain. This I am told is the way certain leases are made by some of the English colleges, and might be perhaps usefully adopted here. But, Sir I again say that will be the business of the committee, and I shall therefore only add at present, that the 4th resolution I wish the House to come to is.—That it is the opinion of this House that tithes should be abolished, and some other mode of paying the established clergy be substituted in their stead.

Sir, the clergy who are not paid by tithe have peculiar influence on their congregations; I mean those of the Dissenters and Catholics, and it would well become the wisdom of Government to make such a liberal provision for them, as would give them a deep interest in the prosperity of the state. The consequence would be that in every corner of the Kingdom, the Legislature would have able men, inculcating the necessity of subordination and obedience to the laws. It must strike every gentleman who hears me, that the clergy from their situation and universality over the country, can be either the great means of fomenting or putting down Rebellion. I may be asked here, but how is the expence to be borne? I answer, that the expence would in a few months be found oeconomy: for their influence, accompanied with the effects of the other resolutions, would soon render 100,000 men of our present military establishment unnecessary. The last resolution I shall therefore propose is.—That it is the opinion of this House that a liberal provision should be made

made for the secular Catholic clergy of this Kingdom; and also for the ministers of the different dissenting congregations now existing in Ireland.

Sir, I should hope the Irish minister and those around him, would support every one of these resolutions; but at all events I cannot suppose they will oppose the two last, because it has been held out both by Mr. Pitt and the castle pamphleteer, that an abolition of tithes, and a provision for the dissenting and Catholic clergy, should accompany an Union. Will the Irish minister say to the People of Ireland, there are good measures with an Union, but totally inadmissible if they retain their independence? Will the Irish minister openly avow, these good things shall not be given you unless you accept a Legislative Union? And if he will not, I shall be glad to hear, what he has to offer against the principle of all or any of these regulations.

Sir, I have now fully given to this House the system that I would adopt, to restore order to this distracted nation; let me now point out, what I am satisfied would be the consequence. It may perhaps, be said with truth, as to three provinces of Ireland, that the great majority of the People know nothing of Parliamentary reform, and that they never annexed to it any specific advantage; but it is not so: as to the Province of Ulster, which is the great stamina of this land, the great mass of the People of that Province are perhaps as sagacious, and as well informed a Peasantry and Yeomanry as any in the King's dominions. They did annex to Parliamentary reform the abolition of useless places, the prevention of corruption, and the improper interference of Great Britain; they did annex to Parliamentary reform, the consequences of an honest, uncorrupt house of Commons. From the situation of the times, I am however persuaded, they would be contented with

with an internal reform of Parliament, followed up by those wholesome laws and regulations, which I have just now proposed. I will venture to say the same of the middling orders in the other three provinces: they will see it is the best that can be done, under the present existing order of things: the clergy of the establishment will of course be the friends of Government, and the other orders of Clergy would I am persuaded be perfectly satisfied. As to the very lowest class of people, they would feel happy in being relieved from Tithe and the payment of two Clergy, the only evils they peculiarly feel. Thus, Sir, I would sweep the whole mass of the People into the bosom of the State; and thus would we be enabled to bid defiance to every foreign and domestic foe. I do not say there would not still remain men whose turbulent spirits, and whose ambitious views would endeavour to overthrow the Constitution; but where would be their armies—where would be their supporters? if they went to the lower orders of the three Provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, and talked to them of grievances, what would be their answer? It would be, we no longer pay tithe—we no longer pay two Clergy, and we are sick of the horrors of civil war. — If they go to Ulster, they would receive for answer, we pay no Tithe, we pay but one Clergyman, and we have got by an internal reform in Parliament, wise laws and wholesome regulations: we therefore love, and we will support the Government. Such also would be the opinions of all the middle orders of men throughout the kingdom; what would be the answer of the Catholic and dissenting Clergy to such agitators? they would say, we are comfortably provided for, and we know there is no change you can bring about, that would better the clerical order; we have seen what has happened to the Clergy by revolutions in other countries, and we will oppose

pose every attempt to overthrow the Constitution of Ireland. Sir, let us pass these resolutions, and follow them up by necessary laws, and every man inclined to rebellion must abandon his purpose or abandon this land.

Let us now consider how these resolutions would operate, as to enabling us effectually to resist a legislative Union. The Irish House of Commons has voted it will have no possible Union: the English Minister in the face of that declaration passes every specific resolution relative to the Union in the British House of Commons, which he follows by a conference with the Lords, who are now considering the same resolutions; and it is declared, that all this is to end in an address to the King to lay them before the Irish Parliament; what does the Irish Minister say, that it is a measure that will never be lost sight of: can any man doubt but with the means in the power of the minister, a majority of one may be obtained in this house; can any man doubt after such a conduct, and such declarations, that they will carry the measure if they can: can any man doubt, if the people are supine, that with the laws now in force, and the military power in the country, that a Legislative Union may be carried; how then are we to stem it? by making the people love and respect this House: by making the people so attached to their own Legislature, that the British minister must feel, that tho' he could carry and enforce Legislative Union for a moment, it would ultimately end in separation: I therefore call on every man to whom a Legislative Union is odious, to support the resolutions I shall propose to you.

Sir, all are agreed that Ireland is in the most critical situation; let then every man feel, that he at least has done his duty; let every man pause, before he tells the people, that their Legislature if it is to continue, must continue under

der a system of corruption; let every man pause before he tells the Catholics, they have nothing to hope from an Irish house of Commons; let every man pause before he tells the people, he will not abolish tithes, tho' England is ready to do so, if a Legislative Union be accepted; let every man pause before he says to the Catholic and dissenting clergy, I will make no provision for you, tho' England will do so, if you adopt a Legislative Union.

Sir, I have not been anxious to obtrude myself on the house, but have waited from day to day, in the hope that some person of more consequence would have offered a system of conciliation; I would have been particularly happy, if such a system had come from the noble Lord on the Treasury bench, because it would then have been peculiarly healing. But finding no man on any side of the House ready to do, what appears to me indispensable to the national safety, I should have felt myself a guilty man, had I remained silent. I have now unburthened my mind, whatever may be the consequence. If these resolutions be rejected, I shall sincerely wish that those measures which may be thought wiser, may answer their purpose. If Irish prosperity and happiness be produced by them, it will be to me, a subject of joy: If on the other hand they create new misfortunes, whilst I lament them, I shall have the consolation, of having done all in the power of an humble individual to avert them. As to myself, I have secured that I shall sleep in peace if I am permitted to live, and if death should be my portion, I trust I shall meet it with fortitude and serenity.



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S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONORABLE

JOHN FOSTER, K

S P E A K E R

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS OF IRELAND,

DELIVERED IN COMMITTEE,

ON THURSDAY THE 11TH DAY OF APRIL, 1799.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY JAMES MOORE, NO. 45, COLLEGE-GREEN.

1799.

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Mr. ROCHFORD,

THE noble Lord, when he declared his assent to the Bill's going into a Committee, has spoken of it as part of a system, and dwelt upon the necessity of a Union, as the only means of effecting the purpose of the bill, and the rest of the system. He has connected the subject of a Legislative Union so much with it, and enlarged so amply upon it, that I feel myself justified in following him. He has gone into the connexion between the two kingdoms, and stated the constitution of 1782 as the source from whence the evils he affects to apprehend, and the remedy he proposes of a Union, flowed. I will go therefore through the whole of the subject, and if I trespass on the patience of the House, which I much fear, from the little practice I have been in for years, of speaking in public, I shall have much reason to entreat their indulgence.

In discussing the subject, I must often allude to a speech published as Mr. Pitt's, and as various editions of it have been circulated, I shall select that to which the Government has given the sanction of its authority,

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the one printed by the King's Printer, under their direction, of which 10,000 copies have been circulated gratis by them, and all of which have been paid for at the public expence.

It is certainly a very flattering compliment, that on so great a subject, on which the Minister spoke for hours, he should have employed a great portion of his time in endeavouring to borrow argument and authority from speeches said to have been made by me so long ago as 1785, and that he should occupy so much of the attention of the British Senate in observing on the conduct or opinion of an individual.

The noble Lord has quoted the speech of Mr. Fox as an historical document, and has told you that the addresses of Parliament, and the speeches of Lord Lieutenants, are not to be relied on. He is the first Secretary who has ever presumed to make such an assertion, who has ever publicly advanced, that what the Commons say to his Majesty, and what his Majesty's Viceroy says to them, is meer matter of form, not to be relied on, but that a casual, unauthorized publication of a Mr. Debrett is a genuine document. He has also used an expression, such a one as I never heard in this House, either before or since the settlement of 1782; the noble Lord has said, (and if I am wrong, he will correct me, I do not wish to mistake any man, much less the noble Lord, for whom I have always had the highest respect,) that the evils he mentioned arose out of the settlement of 1782, because until then this kingdom *acknowledged* the power in the British Parliament to bind Ireland.

Lord

LORD CASTLEREAGH—I did not mean to say, *acknowledged*, but that before the adjustment of 1782, this Country was in the *habit of paying obedience* to that power.

SPEAKER.—The noble Lord copies his brother minister in ambiguity of expression, as well as in all his positions; the minister says, what *puts an end* to any thing is not *final*, and his Lordship tells us, that *paying obedience to a power is not an acknowledgment of that power*.

I will enter into the settlement of 1782: the measures of that year arose out of our disavowal of that very power. Our denial of the British claim gave rise to the glorious settlement of 1782, it removed all those evils which this project of a Union would again heap upon this kingdom, and when the British Minister wants us to give up that Constitution which was then confirmed to us, it is no wonder he should apply all his endeavours to explain it away, as it and his Union are wholly incompatible with each other. His arguments, indeed, (if they deserve that name) are matter of surprise, for they either rest on mis-recollection of facts, or so far from being born up by the authorities he refers to, are clearly and incontrovertibly overturned by them. He says, he will prove his assertion, that no final adjustment was then made, by the recorded opinions of the British Parliament expressed at the time, and by the opinions of the then Government and Ministers, all of which you will presently see, prove the contrary,—but why did he not refer also to the opinions of the Irish Parliament and Irish ministers, whose concern it more immediately was, and whose declarations were explicit? Are we to suppose they escaped his notice, and that he entirely forgot that the Country which demanded redress

redress for its Constitution, best knew how to deem the adjustment of it, final and complete? or that he knew he would find at every step a direct refutation of his assertions?

Before I examine these opinions, it will be necessary that I should state the origin of that settlement, in order that the whole may be perfectly understood.

‘Ireland had for a long series of time,’ to use Mr. Pitt’s words, ‘felt the narrow policy of Great Britain, who, influenced by views of trade and commercial advantage, and tainted and perverted with selfish motives, had treated her with partiality and neglect, and never looked upon her growth and prosperity as the growth and prosperity of the Empire at large.’ It is unnecessary to dwell on the circumstances of the times, or any other cause, which enabled Ireland at last to speak out with effect, but the fact is, that in 1782, her grievances reached the Throne, and on the 9th of April, in that year, Mr. Fox delivered a Message to the British Commons, from his Majesty, ‘That his Majesty, being concerned to find that discontent and jealousies are prevailing among his loyal subjects in Ireland, upon matters of great weight and importance, he earnestly recommends to this House to take the same into consideration, in order to such a final adjustment as may give mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms.” The Irish Parliament at this time stood adjourned to the 16th of April, on which day similar Messages were delivered to both Houses here, each of whom instantly voted an Address to his Majesty, both corresponding exactly in substance, I will therefore detail only the one presented by the Commons.

It went ' to assure his Majesty of our unshaken attach-
 ' ment to his Majesty's person and government, and of our
 ' lively sense of his paternal care, in thus taking the lead to
 ' administer content to his Majesty's subjects of Ireland ;
 ' That, thus encouraged by his royal interposition, we
 ' shall beg leave, with all duty and affection, to lay before
 ' his Majesty the causes of our discontents and jealousies ;
 ' to assure his Majesty that his subjects of Ireland are a
 ' free people ; that the Crown of Ireland is an Imperial
 ' Crown, inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great
 ' Britain, on which connexion the interests and happiness
 ' of both nations essentially depend ; but that the king-
 ' dom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom, with a Parliament
 ' of her own, the sole Legislature thereof ; that there is
 ' no body of men competent to make laws to bind this
 ' nation, except the King, Lords and Commons of Ire-
 ' land, nor any other Parliament which hath any authority
 ' or power, of any sort whatsoever, in this country, save
 ' only the Parliament of Ireland ; to assure his Majesty
 ' that we humbly conceive, that in this right the very
 ' essence of our liberties exist ; a right which we, on the
 ' part of all the people of Ireland, do claim as their birth-
 ' right, and which we cannot yield but with our lives.'

Are these words—empty sounds without meaning—as
 the noble Lord insinuates ? Did we involve our lives and
 fortunes without meaning ? Did we claim our birth-right
 without meaning ? The Address goes on, ' To assure his
 ' Majesty that we have seen, with concern, certain claims
 ' advanced by the Parliament of Great Britain, in an Act,
 ' entitled an Act, for the better securing the Dependency
 ' of Ireland ; an Act containing matter entirely irrecon-
 ' cileable to the fundamental rights of this nation : that
 ' we conceive this Act, and the claims it advances, to be
 ' the great and principal cause of the discontents and jea-
 ' lousies

‘loufies in this kingdom.’ Now, Sir, what was this Act
 of Dependency, but in its effence, in its practical ef-
 fects, the very Union which is now recommended, nay,
 this Union is ftill worfe, for while Ireland retains a Parlia-
 ment, ſhe has the means of redrefs; but the meafure
 propoſed by the noble Lord goes expreſſly to take away
 for ever thoſe means. The Addreſs proceeds, ‘To aſſure
 ‘his Maſteſty, that his Maſteſty’s Commons of Ireland
 ‘do moſt ſincerely wiſh, that all Bills which become
 ‘law in Ireland, ſhould receive the approbation of his
 ‘Maſteſty, under the Seal of Great Britain; but that
 ‘yet we do conſider the practice of ſuppreſſing our
 ‘Bills in the Council of Ireland, or altering the ſame
 ‘any where, to be another juſt cauſe of diſcontent
 ‘and jealouſy;—To aſſure his Maſteſty, that an Act,
 ‘intituled an Act for the better accommodation of his
 ‘Maſteſty’s forces, being unlimited in duration, and
 ‘defective in other inſtances, but paſſed in that ſhape
 ‘from the particular circumſtances of the times, is another
 ‘juſt cauſe of diſcontent and jealouſy in this kingdom.
 ‘That we have ſubmitted theſe, the principal cauſes of
 ‘the preſent diſcontent and jealouſy of Ireland, and re-
 ‘main in humble expectation of redrefs,—that we have
 ‘the greateſt reliance on his Maſteſty’s wiſdom, the moſt
 ‘ſanguine expectations from his virtuous choice of a Chief
 ‘Governor, and great confidence in the wiſe, auſpicious,
 ‘and conſtitutional councils, which we ſee with ſatisſac-
 ‘tion his Maſteſty has adopted: That we have moreover a
 ‘high ſenſe and veneration for the Britiſh character, and
 ‘do therefore conceive, that the proceedings of this coun-
 ‘try, founded as they were in right, and tempered by
 ‘duty, muſt have excited the approbation and eſteem,
 ‘inſtead, of wounding the pride, of the Britiſh nation;
 ‘and we beg leave to aſſure his Maſteſty, that we are the
 ‘ more

‘ more confirmed in this hope, in as much as the people
 ‘ of this kingdom have never expressed a desire to share
 ‘ the freedom of England, without declaring a determi-
 ‘ nation to share her fate likewise, standing and falling
 ‘ with the British Nation.’

You will observe in this Address that four objects, and four only, are pointed out as the grievances, the removal of which is desired, and that they are all *constitutional*—Britain’s claim to bind Ireland—the Appellant Jurisdiction—Poyning’s Law—and the Perpetuity of the Mutiny Bill. In truth, we, who were in Parliament at the time, know that as the freedom of trade was demanded, and acceded to in 1780, and a free intercourse with the colonies confirmed, what remained for *commercial* regulation, or even for attainment, was not then in contemplation.

This address from the Irish Commons, together with a similar one from the Irish Lords, was laid before both Houses in Great Britain, who had not proceeded on his Majesty’s Message, waiting I suppose to know the sense of the Irish Parliament—and they came to a resolution on the 17th of May, which I shall mention presently, and which was laid before the Irish Parliament, on the 27th of the same month, by the Duke of Portland’s order, when he made the following Speech from the Throne :—

‘ My Lords and Gentlemen,

‘ It gives me the utmost satisfaction that the first time
 ‘ I have occasion to address you, I find myself enabled
 ‘ by the magnanimity of the King, and the wisdom of
 ‘ the Parliament of Great Britain, to assure you that im-
 ‘ mediate

'mediate attention has been paid to your representations,
 'and that the British Legislature, have concurred in a
 'resolution to remove the causes of your discontents and
 'jealousies, and are united in a desire to gratify every
 'wish expressed in your late addresses to the Throne.

'By the papers [meaning the resolutions of the British
 'Houses] which in obedience to his Majesty's commands
 'I have directed to be laid before you—you will re-
 'ceive the most convincing testimony of the cordial re-
 'ception which your representations have met with from
 'the Legislature of Great Britain. But his Majesty,
 'whose first and most anxious wish is to exercise his royal
 'prerogative in such manner as may be most conducive to
 'the welfare of all his faithful subjects, has further given
 'it me in command, to assure you of his gracious dis-
 'position to give his royal assent to acts to prevent the
 'suppression of bills in the Privy Council of this king-
 'dom, and the alteration of them any where, and to limit
 'the duration of the act for the better regulation and
 'accommodation of his Majesty's Forces in this kingdom,
 'to the term of two years.

'These benevolent intentions of his Majesty, and the
 'willingness of his Parliament of Great Britain, to se-
 'cond his gracious purposes, are unaccompanied by any
 'stipulation or condition whatever; the good faith, the
 'generosity, the honor of this nation afford them the
 'surest pledge of a corresponding disposition on your
 'part, to promote and perpetuate the harmony, the sta-
 'bility and the glory of the Empire. On my own part
 'I entertain not the least doubt but that the same
 'spirit which urged you to share the freedom of
 'Great Britain, will confirm you in your determination
 'to

‘to share her fate also, standing or falling with the British
‘Nation.’

An Address was returned next day by the Commons
in which they say, ‘That we feel most sensibly the atten-
‘tion which our representations have received from the
‘magnanimity of your Majesty, and the wisdom of the
‘Parliament of Great Britain.

‘We assure your Majesty, that we conceive the resolu-
‘tion for an unqualified, unconditional repeal of the
‘6th of George the first, to be a measure of consum-
‘mate wisdom and justice, suitable to the dignity and
‘eminence of both nations, exalting the character of both,
‘and *furnishing a perpetual pledge of mutual amity.*

‘We assure your Majesty, that we are sensibly affect-
‘ed by your virtuous determination to accede to the
‘wishes of your faithful people, and to exercise your royal
‘prerogative in a manner most conducive to their welfare,
‘and accordingly we shall immediately prepare bills to
‘carry into execution the desires of your Majesty’s peo-
‘ple, and your own benevolent purposes.

‘Gratified in those particulars we do assure your Ma-
‘jesty, that *no constitutional question between the two nations*
‘*will any longer exist, which can interrupt their harmony;* and
‘that Great Britain, as she has approved of our firmness,
‘so she may rely on our affection.

‘We remember, and do repeat, our determination to
‘stand, and fall, with the British Nation.

‘We perceive with pleasure the magnanimity of your
‘Majesty, disclaim the little policy of making a bargain
C with

‘ with your people, and feeling with pride the confidence
 ‘ your Majesty reposes in the good faith, generosity and
 ‘ honor of the Irish Nation, we answer with all humility,
 ‘ that your Majesty entertains a just sense of our charac-
 ‘ ter. Common interest, perpetual connection, the recent
 ‘ conduct of Great Britain, a native affection to the Bri-
 ‘ tish name and nation, together with the constitution
 ‘ which we have recovered, and the high reputation
 ‘ we possess, must ever decide the wishes as well as the
 ‘ interest of Ireland, to *perpetuate the harmony, stability and*
 ‘ *glory of the Empire.*’

This Address received a slight opposition, and very
 fortunately, because a division took place, which shews
 not only the decided sense of the Irish Commons, but that
 the House which expressed that sense was uncommonly
 full.—The ayes were 211—the noes *none*, there being
 only the tellers.

On the same day the Commons also addressed the Lord
 Lieutenant, and among other things they said, ‘ We
 ‘ cannot but rejoice that the name of Portland, so intimate-
 ‘ ly connected with the great æra of British liberty will
 ‘ be handed down to the latest posterity inseparably
 ‘ blended with *the full and perfect establishment of the Con-*
 ‘ *stitution of Ireland.*’

I should here observe, that his Majesty’s answer to
 their first address of April, which had arrived during
 the recess, was not presented until the next day, being
 the 28th, and is in substance as follows :

‘ It gives his Majesty the highest satisfaction to observe,
 ‘ that in their opinion, in which his Majesty perfectly
 ‘ concurs,

‘ concurs, the *constitutional connexion between Great Britain and Ireland is essential to the interests and happiness of both nations*, and that it is the determination of his people of Ireland, to share the fate of, and to stand and fall with, the British nation.

‘ His Majesty conceives that these principles cannot fail to contribute to the *accomplishment* of his earnest desire to remove all cause of discontent and jealousy; with that view his Majesty has recommended this weighty and important subject to the consideration of his parliaments of both kingdoms, trusting that their united wisdom will suggest such measures as may terminate in a *final adjustment* to their mutual satisfaction. With the same view his Majesty intends forthwith to communicate to the Lords and Commons of Great Britain the addresses of the Lords and Commons of Ireland.’

His answer to the latter address of the 27th of May, did not arrive until the 13th of June: in it he says, ‘ He has received with the most sincere satisfaction the dutiful and loyal Address of his House of Commons of Ireland—his Majesty assures his faithful Commons, of his affectionate acceptance of their grateful acknowledgments for the attention which his Majesty and the Parliament of Great Britain have shewn to their representations, and which they so justly consider as *furnishing a perpetual pledge of mutual amity.*’

The declarations of the House of Commons, ‘ that *no constitutional question between the two nations will any longer exist that can interrupt their harmony*, and that Great Britain may rely on their affections, are very pleasing to his Majesty.

‘ His

‘ His Majesty is fully convinced, by their present pro-
 ‘ fessions of entire satisfaction and dutiful attachment,
 ‘ that his Majesty always entertained a just sense of their
 ‘ character. *The zeal which they have shewn to perpetuate*
 ‘ *the harmony, and their determinations to uphold the glory,*
 ‘ *of the Empire,* justify his Majesty for having on his part
 ‘ given the most unequivocal proofs of his royal confi-
 ‘ dence in the honour and good faith of the Irish Na-
 ‘ tion.’

You will keep in mind that in this Answer, his Ma-
 jesty omits any expression recommending *final adjust-*
ment, which he mentioned in his first Message, and re-
 peated in his answer to the first Address, because I shall
 have occasion to call it to your recollection.

After this the Session drew to a close, and it was in
 those days the custom to address the Lord Lieutenant,
 previous to the prorogation, as a compliment, and as a
 review of the material objects of the Session; accord-
 ingly, the Commons, in their Address to the Duke of
 Portland, on the 23d of July, say :

‘ At the close of this session we shall have seen under
 ‘ your Grace’s administration, the Judges rendered inde-
 ‘ pendent of the Crown; the law for the punishment of
 ‘ mutiny and desertion, abridged in duration, and so alter-
 ‘ ed as to become a vindication of the constitution; the
 ‘ jurisdiction of the hereditary Judges of the land restored;
 ‘ the vicious mode of passing laws, which was heretofore
 ‘ exercised in this country, reformed; and the sole and ex-
 ‘ clusive right of Legislation external as well as internal,
 ‘ in the Irish Parliament, firmly asserted on the part of
 ‘ Ireland, and unequivocally acknowledged on the part of
 ‘ Great

‘ Great Britain. We shall have seen this great national
 ‘ *arrangement established on a basis which secures the tranquili-*
 ‘ *ty of Ireland, and unites the affections as well as interests of*
 ‘ *both kingdoms.* When we consider how long we had
 ‘ been labouring for those great and important objects,
 ‘ and that they have been *accomplished* in the short period
 ‘ of your Grace’s Administration, we should be wanting,
 ‘ in justice to your Grace, if we did not acknowledge
 ‘ your virtue.’

The Lord Lieutenant’s speech with which he concluded the Session, soon followed, and his Grace’s words deserve to be most particularly attended to, for language more emphatic could not be used.

‘ Many and great national objects must present them-
 ‘ selves to your consideration during the recess from par-
 ‘ liamentary business, but what I would most earnestly
 ‘ press upon you, as that on which your domestic peace
 ‘ and happiness, and the prosperity of the empire at this
 ‘ moment most immediately depend, is to cultivate and
 ‘ diffuse those sentiments of affection and confidence which
 ‘ are now happily restored between the two kingdoms.
 ‘ *Convince the people in your several districts, as you are your-*
 ‘ *selves convinced, that every cause of past jealousies and discon-*
 ‘ *tents is finally removed, that both countries have pledged their*
 ‘ *good faith to each other, and that their best security will be*
 ‘ *an inviolable adherence to that compact,* that the implicit
 ‘ reliance which Great Britain has reposed on the honor,
 ‘ generosity, and candor of Ireland, engages your
 ‘ national character to a return of sentiments equally li-
 ‘ beral and enlarged, convince them *that the two kingdoms*
 ‘ *are now one, indissolubly connected in unity of constitution, and*
 ‘ *unity of interests,* that the danger and security, the prof-
 ‘ perity

‘perity and calamity of the one, must equally effect the
‘other, and they stand and fall together.’

I have omitted to state in its proper place as to time, that on a difference of opinion happening as to the sufficiency of the repeal of 6 Geo. 1. to secure the Independance of the Irish Parliament, Mr. Flood moved for leave to bring in heads of a bill to declare the sole and exclusive right of the Irish Parliament to make laws in all cases whatever internal and external for the kingdom of Ireland, which was refused, and a resolution was moved, that leave was refused to bring in said heads of a bill, because the sole separate and exclusive right of legislation in the Irish Parliament in all cases whether internal or external had been already asserted by Ireland, and fully, *finally*, and irrevocably acknowledged by the British Parliament. The word *finally* was objected to, and a motion made to expunge it, but on the question being put, it was retained without a division, and the resolution agreed to.

But I will now give you a stronger record than any I have produced, to prove not only the sense of the nation as to the *final* accomplishment, but as to the inestimable value of the settlement. On the 30th of May, being the second day after our Address declaring our entire satisfaction, and that no constitutional question could ever after exist between the two kingdoms to interrupt their harmony, an Address was agreed to by both houses, ‘to represent to his Majesty, that they
‘were so impressed with sentiments of gratitude to Divine Providence, for the many blessings bestowed of
‘late on this kingdom, and *particularly for that union,*
‘*harmony, and cordial affection which now happily subsists*
‘*between his two kingdoms, whose interests are inseparably*
‘*the same,* and for the great and signal success of his
‘Majesty’s

‘Majesty’s Arms in the East and West Indies ;—that
 ‘they had the most sincere and ardent disposition to ex-
 ‘press their unfeigned thanks to Almighty God, for these
 ‘his mercies to both kingdoms, and that whenever his
 ‘Majesty shall please to appoint a day of Public Thank-
 ‘giving, there will not, as they conceive, be any one
 ‘person throughout the nation, who will not most cor-
 ‘dially and sincerely join in the religious observation
 ‘thereof.’

Thus did the nation call on Almighty God to receive their solemn thanks for his blessings to both kingdoms, in the accomplishment of this final adjustment, and yet this is the settlement Mr. Pitt has the hardiness to tell you, is not *final*, and this is the constitution he wants to delude, to threaten, or to force you, into a miserable and abject surrender of.—Can he, can you, can any of us who offered our Thanksgivings on that day, and invoked the Almighty Dispenser of the fate of Nations to receive the overflowing effusions of a kingdom’s gratitude, think so lightly of what we then acknowledged so sacred, as wantonly and foolishly to change those solemn sentiments, and demolish the object of a nation’s Prayer, and of a nation’s Thanks, for the speculative theory or idle declamation of any Minister, however great his talents, his integrity, or his power.

It would be needless to recur to the several arguments, or rather assertions, used by Mr. Pitt, respecting the point of final adjustment—all who hear me I am sure must be of opinion with me, that never was there yet a great speech made by a great man, which contained so little matter ; and if any thing could make me believe that the noble Lord possesses less good sense and political talents than I am disposed to ascribe to him, it is the pains
 which

which he has taken to disseminate in this country such a paltry production. I see the gentlemen are taking down my words,—let them do so—I will repeat them—a paltry production—paltry, not in regard to the Gentleman that made it, who is certainly entitled to the highest respect, but paltry in regard to argument, for it is the merest tissue of general assertion without proof, high-flowing language without meaning, and assumptions without argument, that I ever read.

We will now go to the proceedings in Great Britain; I have mentioned that his Majesty sent a message to the British Houses, on the 9th April, which they did not then take into consideration. The Lord Lieutenant's message which was similar to his Majesty's, and the Irish Addresses of 17th April to the King, were delivered by his Majesty's order to both the British Houses on 1st May, and they were taken into consideration by them on the 17th.

In the Lords a bill was introduced to repeal 6 of Geo. 1. and a resolution entered into 'that it is indispensable to
' the interests and happiness of both kingdoms, that the
' connexion between them should be established by mutu-
' al consent on a solid and permanent footing, and that an
' humble address be presented to his Majesty, that he
' will be pleased to take such measures as in his royal
' wisdom he shall seem think most conducive to that im-
' portant end.'

On the same day the Commons, in a Committee of the whole House, came to two resolutions; one, that 6 G. 1. ought to be repealed; and the other, 'that it is
' indispensable to the interests and happiness of both
' kingdoms, that the connexion between them should be
' established by mutual consent, on a solid and permanent
' basis,' to both of which the House agreed nem. con. Leave was accordingly given for the bill, and an address
voted

voted to the king, containing the substance of the latter resolution, "that he be graciously pleased to take such measures as his Majesty in his royal wisdom shall think most conducive to the establishing, by mutual consent, the connection between this kingdom and Ireland upon a solid and *permanent* basis." This is the Resolution that Mr. Pitt relies on, to shew that the British Legislature had some *further* measures of constitution in contemplation, than those contained in the Irish addresses, and I will in candour suppose that he has been led into this erroneous inference by his mistaking, and of course mistating the date of it.

It is remarkable that although pressed to it, he would not let it be read from the Journals, but boldly maintained that it would appear from them, that a *further* agreement between the two kingdoms, than the settlement of that session, is there stated, in the opinion of the administration of the day, to be absolutely necessary. Under this mistaken impression he asserts that *after* the Bill to repeal the 6 Geo. 1. was passed, an address was moved and carried, (praying his Majesty to take such *further* measures &c. meaning the foregoing address) whereas the Journals would have shewn that this address was voted not only *before* the Bill passed, but *before* it was even presented, and that no one measure of the adjustment had been at the time taken, but that this resolution and address were, on the part of the Commons, the commencement of it.—The address was on the 17th May. The bill was not presented till the 11th of June, and did not pass till the 14th. Had this Address been proposed, as he mistakes, *after* the Bill had passed, that is, after the Irish Parliament had stated their perfect content by declaring "that no constitutional question could ever after exist between the two kingdoms to interrupt their harmony," he

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might

might possibly have had some reason to say, the movers of that Address had *further* constitutional measures to propose, than those which induced that declaration. It is under the mistake of date that Mr. Pitt introduces into the resolution the word *further*, whereas there is no such word in it.

But not only the language of the Ministers of the time, but every circumstance of the proceedings shew that further constitutional measures were not in contemplation. Lord Shelburne in introducing the Address to the Lords, after urging the expedience of repealing 6 Geo. 1. in which the two subjects of the British claim to bind Ireland, and the judicial appeal, were connected, says, "This repeal *was all he meant to propose as matter of Parliamentary decision*, but there were other points for the executive power, the alteration of Poyn- ing's act, and of the perpetual mutiny Bill, in which it would be wise to comply with the wishes of Ireland." This address therefore, in common sense, must have had those points in view, and as to them, it meant to convey to his Majesty the approbation of the House to his exercise of his prerogative in assenting to such Bills, as Ireland should transmit for the purpose.

In the Commons, on the same day, Mr. Fox, after stating the various demands and grievances of Ireland, premised his motion on the resolution, by observing that "the committee must see *that there were only one or two points in which the interference of the British Parliament was necessary*, the repeal of 6 Geo. 1. and the restoration of the appellant jurisdiction to Ireland; the other points lay before the Parliament and the King, and no doubt he would, as one of the servants of the Crown, advise his Majesty to satisfy the other demands of his Irish subjects," and to sanction this advice the resolution

was

was evidently pointed; but admit Mr. Fox might have had further objects in view, and those even of a *constitutional* concern, from the fear which he expressed, that Ireland might think of fresh grievances, we shall see that fear completely removed, when we recollect that this resolution was agreed to on the 16th of May, ten days before it was communicated to the Irish Parliament in order to make the liberal intentions of Britain known,—that the Irish address of the 28th May was founded on this very resolution, to which it is an answer, and that Ireland therein declares her perfect satisfaction, and that the adjustment is *final*, by assuring his Majesty “that no constitutional question can ever hereafter exist between the kingdoms to interrupt their harmony.”

There would have been a great absurdity in that resolution being laid before the Irish Parliament, if it meant *future arrangement* not alluded to in it or explained, when the object declared by his Majesty was *an immediate and final* settlement—at all events Ireland did not consider it to respect future arrangement, or if she did, she gave it a complete answer in saying, every object was accomplished.

We see then, that whatever fear the Minister entertained on this head, if any—was effectually done away by this answer to his resolution; for though he continued in office, and the British Parliament continued sitting some months after, he did not renew the subject or bring forward any measure grounded on it, nor did Mr. Pitt when he became Minister, the commercial propositions only excepted. The fact seems to be, that the resolution in respect to future measures had *commerce only in view*; Mr. Pitt says so, Lord Liverpool relies on it, and although Mr. Fox in the reply, which the noble Lord has read, says it was

to extend to political objects only, yet he explains them to be what are really commercial, by saying, that they alluded to, and were to comprehend the whole system of the *navigation* of the empire, and as such Mr. Pitt and Lord Liverpool relied on it, as a ground of the necessity of the commercial system of 1785.

Mr. Pitt said, “ the meaning of the Resolution moved
 “ in 1782 by the Right Hon. Gentleman himself, was
 “ too stubborn and obvious to be explained away, or
 “ denied.” And Lord Liverpool’s (then Mr. Jenkinson)
 words are very strong.—“ The noble Lord had denied
 “ that any proof had been given of there being any
 “ necessity of coming to a system of commercial arrange-
 “ ment with Ireland, and had contended no such neces-
 “ sity existed. In answer to this, he should think it suf-
 “ ficient to refer the noble Lord to the state of the two
 “ countries, as an ample proof of the necessity, had he
 “ no better proof to advert to; but he was furnished
 “ with the best authority, the authority of that House.
 “ And here he said he must again refer to the Resolu-
 “ tion of May 17th, 1782, wherein it was declar-
 “ ed, ‘ That it was indispensable to the interest and hap-
 “ piness of both kingdoms that the connection between
 “ them should be established by mutual consent, upon a
 “ solid and permanent footing,’ he was aware that the
 “ Right Hon. Gentleman opposite to him had asserted
 “ that the Resolution had no reference to a commercial
 “ arrangement, and that it related merely to a political
 “ one. He never, he declared, attended to hear what
 “ was said in another place, but he had read in a new-
 “ paper that a great authority who had sat in the Ca-
 “ binet when that Resolution had been moved, had de-
 “ clared it did mean a commercial arrangement. For
 “ his part, he could not think it possible for those who
 framed

“ framed the Resolution to have had any arrangement
 “ in their contemplation but a commercial one, and if
 “ it did not mean that, he wished the authors of it
 “ would have been so good as to have declared what it
 “ did mean.”

After reading the address of the Irish Parliament of May 28, which I have stated to you, it could hardly be believed that Mr. Pitt could assert, “ That with respect to that part of the King’s Message which related to the propriety of adopting some measures for a *final* adjustment between the two countries, the Irish Commons were wholly silent,”—yet he has done it roundly and without reserve in the very words I mention. Is the declaration in that address, that no future constitutional question could exist, mere silence? How? Has their language to the Lord Lieutenant of the full and perfect establishment of their constitution, no meaning? What sophistry of argument, what casuistry of language can draw a distinction between the expressions that no future question can exist, and that the matter is finally adjusted; between the words final, and no longer existing—If it puts an end to all future questions, it must be final, because what puts an end, is final—but the whole amount of his reasoning is, that what puts an end to any thing, is not final. It is a powerful proof how little argument he has to stand on, when he resorts to such a wretched play upon words, on a subject of such magnitude.

I would dismiss it without further observation, but that there is one part of that arrangement, and a most material one as to connexion, which he has flurred over without observation; I mean the modification which was then made of Poyning’s law. It will not only fully disprove his assertion, that nothing was then done by Ireland towards establishing a connexion, but it will shew farther
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the basis on which it was then constituted and firmly placed.

The act making this modification, which regulates the manner of passing bills in Parliament, received very uncommon solemnity in its progress. It was moved for 31st of May, three days after the address, and so essential was it deemed, that it was presented as a bill, not as heads in the accustomed manner, and it was sent to the Lords prior to its going to Council, and was carried to the Lord Lieutenant by a joint Committee of both Houses. It enacts, that no Bill shall pass into a Law in Ireland, unless it be returned under the Great Seal of Great Britain. Thus not leaving the connection a bare junction of two kingdoms under one Sovereign, but securing the continuance of that connection, by making the British Minister answerable to the British nation, if any Law should receive the Royal assent in Ireland, which could in any way injure the empire, be incompatible with its imperial interests, or tend to separate Ireland from it. I did at the time say, and do now repeat, that the arrangement would have been imperfect, without this security attending what the British Minister weakly calls a Demolition of system, and what we call a glorious Establishment of the Constitution, confirming the freedom and independence of the Irish Parliament.

I do not hesitate to say, that in thus rendering the Great Seal of Britain necessary to the passing an Irish Law, if we created a theoretic difference in the Constitutions of the two kingdoms, which renders ours inferior, it is one not injurious to us, but necessary from our situation in the empire, and one with which we are content, and which secures Union and Connexion on a firm and lasting basis.

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I therefore agree that the power of the British Parliament extends, as Mr. Dundas has stated, to the controul of the third estate of the Irish Parliament; but it is a controul on the King's naked power of assent only—and this very controul, I say, gives to Britain an effectual pledge to retain in her own hands, that it never shall be in our power by any act of ours to weaken or impair the connexion. On the other hand, we are not without a security on our part, for, by the confirmation of our independence, British law cannot bind us; and, therefore, the Union cannot be altered, impaired, or severed, (putting force and convulsion out of the case) except by our confirming the measure by a law of our own. Great Britain cannot throw us off. An act of the British Parliament is inadequate to it. As an instance, no law of hers could repeal our Annexation Act of Henry VIII.

If I wanted authority for the statement I have given, Lord Auckland, in moving for the repeal of the 6th Geo. I. confirms what I say, in very explicit language:—"As
 " no Irish Bill can pass into law, without the previous con-
 " sent of the King in his Council of England; so there
 " was no danger that the independence of the legislature
 " of Ireland could be made use of to make laws injurious
 " to the sister kingdom; the English Council being re-
 " sponsible for every advice they gave their Sovereign,
 " and England would have nothing to fear from the en-
 " creased power of the Irish Parliament, as the consent
 " of the King would be still necessary to sanctify all their
 " Acts."—Thus, then, our modification of Poyning's Law gives England a security that we cannot dissolve or impair the connexion by any Act of our separate Legislature, while the very independence of that separate Legislature gives us a security that Great Britain cannot
 by

by any law of her's destroy it; we are by these two measures of that day, confirmed in what was, and ever must be our dearest interest, in being an unalienable and inseparable part of the British Empire, not joined together, as some have foolishly asserted, by the nonsense of a Fœderal Union; not, in Mr. Pitt's unmeaning language, by a connexion which hangs on a thread, exposed to all the attacks of party, and all the effects of accident. Fatal would it be for us if it hung on a thread, exposed, as he says, to all the attacks of party, and all the effects of accident; for he and his party have attacked it with such weight of abuse, such a complication of insulting threats, such an ill-judged bombastic exposure of our supposed weaknesses to our enemies, and such an unjustifiable attempt to consolidate to his aid every accident of the circumstances attending both our internal and external situation, that our not being convulsed by these very attempts, is a solid refutation of his assertion, and we may plume ourselves the more on its stability, in as much as it is not in the range of human invention to suppose a more powerful attack of party, or a more artful application of all the accidental circumstances which the present crisis has unfortunately brought to bear together at the same period.—No, Sir, we are, and we are happy to be a Dominion of the Crown of England; a constituent and inseparable part of the Empire, under the same Sovereign; and the Acts of the executive, with regard to our legislation, are the Acts of the King of Great Britain as well as of Ireland in his British Council; unfortunate would it be for us if Ireland was held by a connection as of the person of the King only, and—[a cry of hear! hear! from the Treasury Bench]—I am glad the noble Lord approves of what I say; I am glad he thus shews himself to be of opinion with me, that a better basis already exists for a connexion

connection between the two countries, than that which Mr. Pitt, and the noble Lord would fain impose on us.

Here, then, we see a new and incontrovertible ground whereon not only to assert that the adjustment was *final* as to the Irish constitution, but that it even fulfilled the construction given now by Mr. Pitt, to the resolution of 1782, however contrary to what he gave it in 1785. It also fulfilled his Majesty's gracious recommendations at the time, and in looking back to them, we shall find another proof of every object of constitution or constitutional connection being then considered as finally adjusted; for it is observable that the King, in his first Message, proposes the consideration of Irish grievances in order expressly to obtain a *Final Adjustment*, he uses the same words *Final Adjustment* in his Message by the Duke of Portland, stating his own and the British Parliament's intentions; but as soon as the Irish Parliament on hearing these intentions declared on the 27th of May their satisfaction, and that an end would be put thereby to all constitutional questions, he drops the expression of *Final Adjustment* ever after, and in his answer on the 13th of June, he declares his pleasure in receiving this Declaration, commends them for considering the attention of Great Britain as furnishing a *perpetual pledge of mutual amity*, applauds their zeal *to perpetuate the harmony*, and uphold the glory of the British empire, and he *mentions Final Adjustment no more*.

Would his Minister have advised him to these expressions, if the adjustment furnished no pledge; if it tended no way to perpetuate connection; in short, if it only destroyed the connection, as Mr. Pitt says, by demolishing one system, and not substituting another; or did they not advise him to this language, and
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omit

omit the further mention of Final Adjustment; because they considered the declaration of the Irish Parliament, and the modification of Poyning's Law to have accomplished every object of constitutional adjustment, and constitutional connection?

But I will give you further evidence of their sentiments having been as I state them in July, 1782. The Lord Lieutenant's language to the Parliament, in the speech which I have read to you was, that they should convince the people that every cause of past jealousy and discontent was *finally* removed (there his use of the expression finally is decisive); that both countries had pledged their faith to each other, and that their best security would be an adherence to that compact, that the two kingdoms were now one, indissolubly connected in unity of Constitution, and unity of interests, that they stand and fall together.

If the British Minister of that day had in view more than was done—if he thought the work incomplete as to his object, he would have followed up the measure to its completion, he would not have allowed the Duke of Portland to use language tending to impose on, and not to conciliate both kingdoms. He would not have added to a dereliction of duty, a gross and unworthy deceit—nor would his Grace have submitted to the mean office of stating a compact that was never made, a unity that was not formed—that both kingdoms were indissolubly one, when the very measure, in Mr. Pitt's ideas, untied the only bond that held the two kingdoms together.

Mr. Pitt could not have been ignorant of all these facts in 1782, however he may have forgot them in 1799—and that he was not ignorant of them, but considered

dered the work of 1782 as final and complete to its object of constitutional concerns, I may appeal to his own conduct the year following, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and spoke to the subject on Mr. Grenville's motion—and when, if the measures of 1782 were incomplete, if the resolution of 1782 alluded to further objects of Constitution, he had had several months for consideration, and it would have been his duty to have proposed means to supply the defect, whereas he did not in that speech complain of any defect, nor talk of any Constitutional measures unfinished as part of the system of 1782. He became Minister the year after, and I may appeal more forcibly to his conduct ever since, full fifteen years, during all which time he has done nothing towards Constitution—nay not only done nothing, but even during the Commercial Propositions in 1785, not a word did he utter to imply that the settlement of 1782 was not final as to Constitution.

He must either then retract his new doctrines of 1799, or plead guilty to a shameful and continued dereliction of his duty, in having suffered the empire to remain during 15 years in a state which he now represents as having all the while endangered its very existence. The fact is, he was guilty of no dereliction, and I am happy in any thing to be his advocate. The measures of 1782, were all constitutional and final, notwithstanding he has begun in 1799 to say otherwise.

Any one of the many proofs I have adduced, would be sufficient to justify me in asserting, that the settlement of 1782, so far as regarded *constitution and constitutional connection*, was final—and I most devoutly trust it ever will remain so. I might rest singly on the opinions of the Irish Parliament, repeated often throughout

three months in various ways (which Mr. P. never stated), or the opinions of the British Parliament and British Ministers, who conducted the measure, which he relied on with such an assuming superiority, or even on his own conduct at the time, or on his conduct and language in 1785, or on his conduct and language ever since; but the whole concurrence of them forms such a mass of evidence, such a chain of incontrovertible argument, that he must have more than common dullness, or a most persevering obstinacy, who can entertain a doubt upon the subject.

Further to expose the futility of his assertion, that nothing was done in 1782 towards connection, I might remind you of one other measure of connection attending that period, the act called Lord Yelverton's, which passed the same day with the one I have just explained as to the British seal. Its preamble states a principle of connection for the future conduct of our Legislature—"Whereas
 " it is the earnest and affectionate desire, as well as true
 " interest, of your Majesty's subjects of this kingdom, to
 " promote, as far as in them lies, the navigation, trade,
 " and commercial interests of Great Britain as well as
 " Ireland—and whereas a similarity of laws, manners,
 " and customs, must naturally conduce to strengthen and
 " perpetuate that affection and harmony which do, and at
 " all times ought to subsist between the people of Great
 " Britain and Ireland"—and the body of it proceeds on
 the same principle, by enacting, "That all such clauses and
 " provisions contained in any statutes made in England or
 " Great Britain, concerning commerce, as import to im-
 " pose equal restraints on the subjects of both kingdoms
 " or to entitle them to equal benefits or as equally con-
 " cern the seamen of both kingdoms, save so far as the
 " same have been altered or repealed, shall be accepted,
 " used, and executed in this kingdom, according to the
 " present

“ present tenor thereof respectively,” thus enacting at one stroke every law of Britain respecting commerce, and making it the uniform law of the whole empire, if it equally affected the whole empire.

Let us look back then for a moment to facts, and contrast them with Mr. Pitt's assertions. Ireland said in 1782, “ *no constitutional question can ever after exist to interrupt the harmony of the two kingdoms. Constitution is finally settled.*” Mr. Pitt says, we are a silly nation—we did not understand the words we used, and there was no final settlement.

Ireland in 1782, placed a negative controul in Great Britain over her acts, in order to secure the connection. Mr. Pitt says we are mistaken, and did nothing, or it's of no avail.

His Majesty applauds the Irish Parliament for their declaration that the *constitutional connection between the two kingdoms, is essential to their interest and happiness.* Mr. Pitt says it is all a mockery—there is no constitutional connection.

His Majesty congratulates them on their declaration that *no Constitution can exist to interrupt harmony.* Mr. Pitt says it is all unfounded, and every constitutional question still exists that can interrupt their harmony.

His Majesty says *the attention of the British Parliament to Ireland, furnished a perpetual pledge of amity;* the Irish Parliament said the same; but Mr. Pitt says it was no pledge, or it must be destroyed, to introduce a wild theory of his own, not asked or sought for by either nation.

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The Irish Parliament said, *the constitution which they recovered in 1782, bound them to perpetuate the harmony, stability, and glory of the empire.* Mr. Pitt says he will annihilate that constitution, at the risk even of that harmony, and without regard to the circumstances of the times, which may make the attempt peculiarly fatal.

The Irish Parliament states with gratitude to the Duke of Portland then Lord Lieutenant, that *their constitution is fully and perfectly established.* Mr. Pitt says it is all a falsehood—we neither have, nor ought to have, nor can have a constitution of our own.

The same Lord Lieutenant tells the Commons that *to settle the constitution of Ireland on a secure foundation, and to unite its interests and affections with those of Great Britain,* were the principal objects of his administration, and he is happy that *they are accomplished.* Mr. Pitt gives his Grace a direct contradiction, and tells Ireland, Don't believe the Duke of Portland; there was no constitution settled—no foundation formed—no interests united—or if there were, that he must annihilate that constitution, destroy the foundations of it, and with it all that unity of interest and affection which Ireland said rested on them.

The same Lord Lieutenant desires you to convince the nation, as you are yourselves convinced, *that every cause of jealousy and discontent is finally removed.* No such thing, says Mr. Pitt; there was no final settlement to remove them, or if there was, it must be given up, and I will risk their being aroused afresh.

The Viceroy proceeds—*both countries have pledged their faith to each other, their best security will be an inviolable adherence to that compact—I deny any compact,* says Mr.

Mr. Pitt, and I will break that pledge, and here let me request your attention, while I ask that gentleman and his representative here, if this be his conduct, as to a compact so solemnly made and ratified by both nations; what reliance can this kingdom place on his adherence to any compact on which he would rest his projected Union, especially when there would not be an Irish Parliament sitting then, as there is now, to enforce and protect it?

The same Viceroy goes on, "*the two kingdoms are now one, indissolubly connected in unity of constitution, and unity of interests, and they must stand or fall together.*" You are not indissolubly connected, "says Mr. Pitt, your connection hangs by a thread; your constitution is of a nature to prevent unity, and your separate interests are destroying that connection, which the Viceroy called indissoluble."

Does this Gentleman who thus contradicts King, Lords, Commons, Viceroy and, himself, forget our solemn acknowledgment of that day, let him look to our Journals that I have read to you, and he will find that we thought our connection so happily settled, and our connection with Britain rendered so secure, that the whole nation desired to return their solemn thanks to God for *that Union, harmony and cordial affection which the final adjustment of 1782 secured to both kingdoms.* In these thanks we acknowledged their interests to be inseparably the same, and offered our unfeigned gratitude to the Almighty for his blessings to both kingdoms, and the accomplishment of that final adjustment. All a mistake, says Mr. Pitt, you called Heaven to witness in vain, there was no final adjustment.

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Need I go farther ? is not the imposition too gross, even for the dullest understanding ever imputed to the Irish climate ? every thing shews you the adjustment was final ; it is our Second, if not our Great *Magna Charta*, and he would never labour with so much, but so impotent sophistry to deny it, if he did not know its value and its strength.

A Union is in its instant operation a total extinction of it, and after it has not only secured, but absolutely showered down upon you, more blessings, more trade, more affluence than ever fell to your lot, in double the space of time which has elapsed since its attainment ; will you be cajoled, duped, or threatened into a surrender of it ? Forbid it, every honest heart that glows with Irish blood, forbid it virtue, forbid it patriotism, and forbid it Heaven, whose blessings we implored on its perpetual continuance. For years you laboured to acquire it, in 1782 it crowned your glorious efforts, and did you gain it only to destroy it ? will you give ear to the folly that you asked it in order to annihilate it ? for such is the consummate folly of those who argue that the British resolutions which confirmed it, looked at the very time to future measures for destroying it.

Is it to be supposed, (to return again to the resolution Mr. Pitt relies on,) that when a free constitution was offered to Ireland, it was accompanied with a resolution to destroy it ? and that that very resolution was presented to our Parliament at the same moment with the offer of that free constitution ? No, Sir, Union and the Constitution of 1782 are incompatible, they are direct opposites, and that is the reason why I lay so much stress on the adjustment of 1782, because while we hold it sacred, *this accursed Union* never can take place. I am not so silly as to say its being final, renders it physically or politically unalterable ; but I state its perfection to

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to urge its value and its efficacy for every end of happiness, and I shew you the dangers which must follow its annihilation, to warn you against surrendering it. I say again that it is not to be wondered at, that those who now advise the ruinous measure of an Union—a measure calculated to disturb the harmony and threaten the existence of the empire, should wish to calumniate the glorious constitution of 1782, and ascribe to it neither permanency of principle, nor permanency of adjustment.

I have shewn you, that if the Minister in 1782 looked forward to any measures beyond that year, it was to commercial ones only. No advance was made as to commerce in general, except what was done by Yelverton's bill. I will therefore now examine the following measures of 1785, which were merely commercial, and the proceedings and opinions declared by the Parliaments of both kingdoms, and all the ministers concerned will add many incontrovertible proofs to what I have already adduced so many proofs to, that the adjustment of 1782 was constitutional only, and final.

Towards the close of the Irish session following that of 1782, the Commons address the Duke of Rutland:—

“ We reflect with true pride and satisfaction upon
 “ the solid advantages which have been obtained for this
 “ country within a very short period. We are aware of
 “ the situation of the empire, and the peculiar circum-
 “ stances which have *prevented the adjustment of some*
 “ *points which concern our trade and manufactures*, and we
 “ rely upon the readiness of your Grace's liberal and
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“benevolent assistance for the furtherance of such practical measures, as deliberate wisdom and generous policy may adapt to our real necessities and general interests,” and here mark the words, the adjustment of some points which concern our trade and manufactures;—not a word about Constitution,—it was all settled.

The day following the Commons, in an address to his Majesty, which passed Nem. Con. represent to him “their warmest hope, that the interval between this session and the next will afford sufficient opportunity for forming a wise and well digested plan, for a liberal arrangement of commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland to be then brought forward; that such a plan formed upon the broad basis of reciprocal advantage, would be the most effectual means of strengthening the empire at large, and cherishing the common interests and brotherly affections of both kingdoms.”

The Recess was accordingly employed in forming such a plan, and it is well known, that I, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, had the honour of being called on by the British Minister to assist in the work.

The next session opened with a Speech from the Duke of Rutland, which begins with these words.

“I am to recommend, in the King’s name, to your earnest investigation, those objects of trade and commerce between Great Britain and Ireland, which have not yet received their compleat adjustment.”

(Mark the expression—*which have not yet received their compleat*

compleat adjustment.) “ In framing a plan, with a view
 “ to a final settlement, you will be sensible that the
 “ interests of Great Britain and Ireland, ought to be for
 “ ever united and inseparable, and his Majesty relies on
 “ your liberality and wisdom for adopting such an equi-
 “ table system, for the joint benefit of both countries,
 “ and the support of the common interest, as will se-
 “ cure mutual satisfaction and permanency. The uni-
 “ formity of laws and of religion, and a common in-
 “ terest in treaties with foreign states, form a sure bond
 “ of mutual connection and attachment between Great
 “ Britain and Ireland; it will be your care to cherish
 “ those inestimable blessings, with that spirit and wisdom
 “ which will render them effectual securities to the
 “ strength and prosperity of the empire.”

You will observe, that treaties with foreign states are here mentioned, because it shows they were in consideration as part of the commercial subject afterwards declared final. They have been stated by the noble Lord to-day as an imperial consideration calling for a Union, and notcapable of arrangement by a distinct legislature?

A plan was submitted to the Irish Commons in eleven propositions which were agreed to, and the address conveying them to the throne received, I may say, the universal and warm approbation of the House, as on a division there were no Noes except the Tellers. Both Houses joined in the Address, which shews the decided sentiment of Parliament, that the passing of these Resolutions into Law, would have completely answered all the purposes of the present project.

The Address is worth attending to:—

“ That our gratitude is peculiarly due to his Majesty, for the measures which, since last session of Parliament, have been taken by his royal command, towards forming an arrangement of commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland. That with the most sanguine hope they look forward to the confirmation of these resolutions, containing the principles upon which, they trust, the commercial interests of the two nations will be finally established. When these shall be happily and fully carried into effect, through his Majesty’s paternal goodness, and the wisdom and liberality of his Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland, they shall, with the most sincere satisfaction, behold a system established upon the firm basis of reciprocal advantage, which will completely strengthen and cement the common interest and mutual affection of both kingdoms, and will indissolubly unite the efforts of all his Majesty’s subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, in maintaining the strength, increasing the resources, and extending the power and credit of the British empire—and that it is their fervent prayer, that his Majesty may long possess the true reward of a great and generous mind, in beholding the blessings derived under his royal auspices, and in receiving the just tribute of the most zealous duty and attachment from his loyal and affectionate people.”

In Great Britain the King, in opening the session of the same year, (1785), said, “ Among the objects which now require consideration, I must particularly recommend to your earnest attention the adjustment of such points in the commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland, as are not yet finally arranged. The
“ system

“ system which will unite both kingdoms most closely on
 “ principles of reciprocal advantage, will, I am per--
 “ suaded, best secure the general prosperity of my do-
 “ minions.”

Observe here, from the proceedings in both king-
 doms, that *commercial arrangement* only was in contem-
 plation—and Mr. Pitt's words, when he introduced
 the subject, deserve particular attention :

“ There was not a man in the House who would not
 “ agree, that settling the commercial intercourse of the
 “ two kingdoms on a firm, liberal, and permanent basis,
 “ by which an end might be put to all jealousies and
 “ clamour, and by which all future pretexts to discontent
 “ might be removed, and by which the surest foundations
 “ of future strength and opulence might be laid, was
 “ one of the greatest topics which could be agitated
 “ in Parliament, and one of the most desirable objects
 “ that they could accomplish.”

Again—“ He desires the House to recollect, that
 “ amongst the many objects to which the Legislature had
 “ for some years directed its attention, the affairs of Ire-
 “ land, and the forming a suitable arrangement between
 “ that country and this, were nearly the most considera-
 “ ble. A vast deal had already been done by former ad-
 “ ministrations, but not enough—and his present plan was
 “ *nothing more than a necessary supplement* to those which
 “ had formerly been adopted (meaning those of 1779 and
 “ 1780, and the settlement of 1782), for the purpose of
 “ creating such a mutual interest as should for ever pre-
 “ serve inviolable and secure the connection between the
 “ countries.”

Here

Here we have his own authority for all that was necessary at that day to secure the connexion inviolate, and form a complete arrangement. The previous measure of constitutional settlement in 1782, was in his opinion of that day, final and complete as to its object. His *supplement* of commercial arrangement alone was wanting to perfect all; let us examine it; not a word in it of constitution, of the concerns of peace and war, which the noble Lord and he now so magnify, of treaties which the Duke of Rutland suggested for consideration; of these difficulties which he now states as curable only by his new medicine; (all of which I shall bye and by remove)—not a word of Regency, the object of the present bill, or of the objections he now starts to the independence of our Legislature.

But I will not only give you his authority in 1785, I will shew you the same sentiment expressed in the same year in stronger language, by both Houses, in a joint Address, which he moved in the Commons, and by his Majesty's Answer to it.

The Address says:—

“ We have thus far performed our part in this important business; and we trust, that in the whole of its progress, reciprocal interests and mutual affection will insure that spirit of Union, so essentially necessary to the great end which the two countries have equally in view.

“ In this persuasion we look forward with confidence to the final completion of a measure which, while it tends to perpetuate the harmony and friendship between the two kingdoms, must by augmenting their resources, uniting

“ uniting their efforts, and consolidating their strength, af-
 “ ford your Majesty the surest means of establishing on a
 “ lasting foundation, the safety, prosperity, and glory of
 “ the empire.”

To which his Majesty replied :

“ A full and equal participation of commercial ad-
 “ vantages, and a similarity of laws in those points
 “ which are necessary for their preservation and security,
 “ must be the surest bond of Union between the two king-
 “ doms, and the source of reciprocal and increasing be-
 “ nefits to both.”

Thus do the Lords and Commons of Great Bri-
 tain declare, that the measures proposed in 1785, which
 were all commercial, will perpetuate harmony between
 the two kingdoms, and must, by augmenting their
 resources, uniting their efforts, and consolidating their
 strength, afford the surest means of establishing on a last-
 ing foundation the safety, prosperity, and glory of the
 empire—the very phrases and high-sounding language
 which he applies to his plan of Union.

Thus does the King say, that the same measures
 must be the surest *bond of Union* between the kingdoms,
 and the source of reciprocal and increasing benefits to
 both.

And thus, what Mr. Pitt, the Parliament, and the
 King, all declared sufficient and complete in 1785, to
 have worked all the wonders of his present *Nostrum*,
 without any of the poisonous, political, or constitutional
 ingredients, he would now dose us with, this same Mr.
 Pitt

Pitt says in 1799, was a *partial and inadequate measure*. These are his very expressions as published.

What in 1785 he declared to be a supplement to the establishment of 1782, cannot in 1799 be accomplished without destroying that establishment, which it was to support and strengthen.

In 1785, he told you that the measure he then proposed "was to preserve and secure the connection inviolate."—He tells you now it would not have done either; it was a *partial and inadequate measure*.

In 1785, he told you "it was the only possible means by which the connection between the two kingdoms could effectually and with prudence be established;"—his very words as recorded in Debrett's Debates;—and he now tells you, *it was partial and inadequate*, and could not have established any thing.

In 1785 he stated "it was to form a final adjustment of commercial interests between the two countries—in 1799, he says the adjustment would have been *partial and inadequate*. And thus he again puzzles us with his use of the word *final*. In 1782 what puts an end to any thing, is not final.—In 1785 what is partial and inadequate, is final.

In 1785 "it was one of the greatest topics which could be agitated in Parliament;" now it is no great topic, but a *partial and inadequate measure*.

In 1785 it was "of the greatest and most decisive importance to both kingdoms, since the end and object was no less than to establish a system that should be permanent

ment and irrevocable, (his own words, as Debrett records them), but now that system is called *partial and inadequate*.

In 1785 he states the measure to be “the one among
“all the objects of his political life the most important
“he had ever engaged in, nor did he imagine he should
“ever meet another, that would call forth all his feelings,
“and rouse every exertion of his heart in so forcible a
“manner—a measure in which he verily believes was in-
“volved every prospect that still remained to Great Bri-
“tain of again lifting her head to that height and emi-
“nence which she possessed among nations.”—He tells
you now, it had no importance, it was a *partial and inadequate measure*.

Would to God he had kept those same feelings, and that same heart of 1785 to actuate his conduct at this day, and our growing prosperity and happiness would not be interrupted, as they now are, by his wild projects! Would to God he had preserved the consistency, which I preserved, and he has abandoned, and he would not now bring the connection and safety of this kingdom into hazard, by endeavouring in 1799 to destroy the final adjustment of 1782, which in 1785 he proposed to strengthen and perpetuate for ever!

And is this the consistent gentleman who is wantonly and unprovokedly to charge me with inconsistency? and what inconsistency does he charge me with? that I expressly stated in 1785 that the final adjustment of 1782 could not last. Not even the imperfect record of my language that day, asserts any thing like it. I never said so, expressly or impliedly; on the contrary, I deemed that adjustment so sacred, so valuable, and so rivetted to the interest and feelings of the whole kingdom, that I premised what I was going to say by the following

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words:—" (Mr. Foster said) he could not sit silent when
 " he heard a measure in which he was proud to have
 " had a considerable part, represented by so many gentle-
 " men as injurious to the independence of the Irish le-
 " gislature, and a barter of the constitution for com-
 " merce. *He should think himself, indeed, unworthy of a*
 " *seat in that House, or of the name of Irishman, if he*
 " *could consent to barter an atom of the constitution of his*
 " *country, for all the commerce in the world;* but he was
 " so fully satisfied the present measure did not violate it,
 " in the smallest degree, that he could not repress his sur-
 " prise at its being supposed to do so." Here I cannot
 help remarking, that in a publication of Mr. Pitt's speech
 with an extract annexed, of what Woodfall recorded of
 me at that period; these words are wholly omitted,
 though they are in Woodfall's debates.

And in the last debate on it I said that " I would stand
 " or fall with the bill, that not a line in it touches our
 " constitution," and not a line did touch it, whatever
 interpretation might be put on the alterations made
 by Mr. Pitt in the propositions. I assert the Irish Par-
 liament never gave a decision on these alterations, nor
 was any question ever put here upon one of them.
 The advocates for the commercial propositions wisely
 chose to express their sentiments, in a bill which effected
 every purpose, without adopting even any the most
 distant or doubtful encroachment on the independence
 of our Legislature. This bill is on your records.

By what fatality this measure failed at the time, and how
 the alterations made by Britain overthrew it I need not
 state; I will only say, that where a suspicion, that the
 operation of them might affect the independence of our
 Legislature, created such a general disapprobation as
 obliged him to abandon the measure, he should have
 learned

learned wisdom thereby, and not have proposed at this day, to a nation so greatly attached to that independence, and the more so for her rising prosperity since its attainment, a measure which does not barely go to alter it, but avowedly and expressly to extinguish it; he should have recollected, that he now offers no one practical or even speculative advantage in commerce when the total extinction is required; and that a measure suspected only to infringe on that independence failed in his hands, though accompanied with offers of solid and substantial benefit to trade.

The measure then of 1782 was all constitutional—that of 1785 all commercial—and to select general expressions made use of on the one subject, and apply them to the other, shews no great candour in reasoning; however, I can safely give him all the advantage of it, and still refute him.

The words ascribed to me in the publication by Woodfall, were supposed to be spoken in the debate before the propositions were agreed to—"That things could not remain as they were."—I believe I did use that expression, at least I accede to it, because it was my sentiment, and I say so still, that things could not have remained as they were—and things do not remain as they were.

By what fatality is it that he cannot recollect that the great grounds of commercial jealousy, which it was the object of 1785 to settle for the permanency of our connexion, and to which alone my words applied, have been since adjusted by laws of his own supporting in the one kingdom, and approbation in the other.

I repeat again the same assertion, *things have not remained as they were.* The construction of the navigation act, which prevented Britain receiving colonial or
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foreign

foreign goods through Ireland, has been done away in 1793, by a law, introduced by Lord Hobart, to permit the import into Great Britain from Ireland, of all goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the British colonies, or of Asia, Africa, or America. The former construction, was the great and constant object of Irish jealousy, and it was a leading measure in the propositions of 1785.

In the same year, in order to remove a great and pressing object of British jealousy, which was likewise a great and fundamental article in those propositions, we restrained, by an Irish act, Ireland's acknowledged right to trade within the limits of the East-India Company's charter, and confirmed to that Company their monopoly of the whole trade to all the world beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Streights of Magellan—although when Mr. Eden, in 1785, talked “ of the period of the expiration of the Company's charter not being very distant, and that there remained no power in Britain to renew it or any exclusive privilege,” he said, “ that the disposition which was already manifested in Ireland, to avail themselves of the advantages of the Oriental trade, would shew that on such an event they would not be induced to resign their pretensions.”

We adopted the navigation act, which Great Britain justly boasts to be a main prop of the commercial system on which the naval strength of the empire rests, by making it Irish law, not by reciting its provisions, but taking it in toto by its title.

We enacted the same laws for registry of shipping, for increase of shipping, for manifests—all great and imperial objects to the trade of the empire.

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We established the necessary regulation for Greenwich Hospital, and Light-house duties.

In short there is no one measure of general or imperial concern, or even of colonial trade, unattended to by us, or left for Irish law to enact a similarity of rule in.

I do not call the arrangement of duties on the interchange of native productions or manufactures, between the two kingdoms, an object of imperial concern; but if I did, I would assert on the authority of Mr. Pitt, of the Parliaments of both countries, and of experience, that separate Legislatures are perfectly competent to it, and the more so, as more likely to give that stability which mutual content and satisfaction can alone secure. And I would further assert, that every practicable benefit in that respect, which those propositions might have arranged, is actually and practically enjoyed ever since, and will continue to be so, as long as mutual interest and good-will shall direct each country.

Our object was to secure the continuance of the intercourse in a sort of *statu quo*, and so it remains.

I will not hesitate then to say, name to me any one matter of general or imperial concern which those propositions would have arranged, and which is not arranged—if you can, I should not fear to say, the same attention will instantly adopt it, and that he is not a good Irishman who knows of any such, and refuses to suggest it. Let the noble lord propose them, and not keep the country in agitation by suspending this ruinous measure over it. Let the silly attempt to encourage its revival, by getting resolutions privately signed for it, be abandoned. If you doubt the general execration in which it is held, call the counties—take their sense at public meetings,

ings, instead of preventing those meetings, lest the general sense should be known, and put an end to all the idle and silly tricks of circulating stories that this gentleman and that gentleman has changed his mind. Why, Sir, it has been told industriously that I have altered my opinion—what I have already said shews I have not; but the noble lord shall have ample proof of it, before I sit down.

But, to return to my argument—I ask where is the difference of our situation now from what it would have been, had the commercial measures of 1785 been established?—None in fact. The only distinction is, that what the policy of that day intended to have made matter of *compact*, the mutual interest, common concern, brotherly affection, and inviolable connection of the two kingdoms, have effected voluntarily and gradually since—and thus we have not only looked forward with the British Parliament to the final completion of a measure which, to use their emphatic language, must perpetuate harmony between the kingdoms, augment their resources, unite their efforts, consolidate their strength, and establish on a lasting foundation the safety, prosperity, and glory of the empire; but we have attained it, and the empire is actually in the complete practical enjoyment of all its benefits, and of the full and equal participation of commercial advantages, and that similarity of laws for their preservation, which his Majesty, like the wise and benevolent father of all his people, declared to be the surest bond of union between the two kingdoms, actually and effectually exists.

It is charged further to me, that I not only said in 1785, that things could not remain as they were, speaking of the commercial propositions, but that I added,

ded, "commercial jealousy is roused, it will increase with
 "two independent Legislatures, if they don't mutually
 "declare the principles whereby their powers shall be se-
 "parately employed, in directing the common concerns
 "of trade."

I was right in that assertion; the navigation act, East-India act, and other laws since, have extinguished the commercial jealousy I alluded to, and declared the principles I mentioned, and each Legislature has been effectually employed thereby in directing the common concerns of trade.

I added too, "that without united interest of commerce, in a commercial empire, political union
 "will receive many shocks, and separation of interest
 "must threaten separation of connection, which
 "every honest Irishman must shudder to look at."—Now, thanks to the good sense of both kingdoms, that united interest of commerce has been cherished and maintained by those very laws, and in every circumstance from that day a mutual affection, a wish to support a mutual and common interest, has marked every act of either Legislature, and of course no political shock has arisen, nor could arise, save only the fatal and desperate shock which now awaits us, from this unprovoked, unnecessary, and destructive project of a Legislative Union—a shock which, if persevered in, must threaten separation of connection, which every honest man, Englishman or Irishman, *must shudder even to look at as a possible event.*

Is there a word in all the language ascribed to me in 1785, against the final adjustment of 1782? Quite the contrary—I argued that two independent Legislatures existed, and therefore commercial settlement was necessary. I took their existence as a position not to be
 ference.

altered, or controverted, and therefore drew that inference. He agreed with me then in the theory, and has since realised it into practice, by the laws I have mentioned. But to put the argument in the strongest logical form it will bear, two independent Legislatures and unsettled commerce cannot exist together with safety; but commerce has been settled, and therefore the two independent Legislatures may exist—or again, either a Legislative Union, or a settlement of commerce must take place, the settlement of commerce has taken place, therefore the Legislative Union need not. The fair statement is, as it would have stood in 1785—two independent Legislatures and unsettled commerce cannot exist with safety, but the two independent Legislatures must exist, therefore the commerce must be settled, and it has been.

I will only add, that the present flourishing state of the Empire confirms my assertion, that things have not remained as they were; for if his prediction was true, Great Britain could not, if they so remained, have lifted her head to that height and eminence which she once possessed among nations, whereas she not only has done so, but has towered above the whole surrounding world, notwithstanding the question in 1785 failed, in which question, to use his own words, was involved every prospect that still remained to her of doing so. His assertion was right, and it has proved true; why? because every measure in his view, when he made that declaration, has actually taken place since, although the mode of effecting them as proposed in 1785 was abandoned at the time, and here I will dismiss this part of the subject, with applying it as a full answer to one of his disjunctive sophisms, which he states so boldly when he asks, “how
“is the evil of commercial jealousies acting upon the
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laws of two independent legislatures to be remedied? and answers: by two means only, either by some compact entered into by the legislatures of the two countries, or else by blending the two legislatures together. I defy the wit of man, he says, to point out a third. I answer, his own conduct and that of both the kingdoms has pointed out a third, that of the good sense and mutual interest of each country from time to time, passing all laws necessary to prevent the operation or inconveniencies of commercial jealousies: a mode which was not as certain at the time as the Propositions, because there was no security of its being adopted, but which being carried into execution, is not only equally effectual, but is more sure and permanent, in as much as mutual good-will and interest form a more indissoluble junction than the compulsion of law, which as between states, has never proved a valid bond, when the others ceased to exist.

Experience too shews us this third mode has answered, for though we have greatly extended and encreased our trade, not a jealousy has arisen to interrupt harmony; on the contrary, the final adjustment of 1782 has proved itself, as we then stated it would be, a sure pledge of mutual amity. This refutes too, (if it had not been already refuted) his strange assertion, that there is not a man who believes there is a solid bond of connexion between the countries; if he means by solid that only which is by express and written compact, I answer, a connexion founded on the content, the interest, the affection of the country, alone deserves the name of solid, such we are in the ample and full possession of, and any other, which affects to bind by a parchment roll against inclination, interest and feeling, is too frail to continue long. Bonds of force, or even deluded or delusive consent, will only exist to be broken, such bonds soon assume the galling shape of

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fetters, and the more they are felt, the greater exertion will be provoked to throw them off; whereas those of interest and good will grow stronger in proportion to the feeling they arouse. But let us examine fully this part of the existing connexion between the two kingdoms; and the noble Lord invites me to it, for he rests all his arguments on the insufficiency of the present connexion.

We might have expected that the advocates for innovation and changing the situation in which we are rapidly thriving, instead of general and bare assertions that there is not a sufficient connexion at present existing, would have stated the instances wherein it was deficient. I can find only two even suggested, the one of peace and war including treaties, the other of a regency.

As to peace and war, which the noble Lord in his adoption of Mr. Pitt's assertions relies upon, he should recollect that the sole and absolute right of making either rests in the executive power, it is the King's prerogative. I need not shew that by law the executive is and ever must be the same, and with the same constitutional powers, in each kingdom. The prerogative not being conferred by statute law, has and ever must have equal powers in each, when not controuled by law. Separate legislatures don't affect the executive, where he acts independent of the authority of legislation; but from the balance of power to which the British Constitution owes its great excellence, the executive, though vested with power to act by declaring war, is forced to apply to Parliament for the means to carry it on, and therefore must consult their opinion and ask their advice. Suppose then the British Parliament to approve a war, and that of Ireland to disapprove, the only difficulty which this difference of sentiment could create would be, that
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the one who disapproved, might withhold its supplies until good sense should induce it to acquiesce. It could not by the refusal stand clear of the miseries, and hazards, and losses of war, because the King's declaration involves it equally as Britain.

As to peace, no refusal of supplies could there inconvenience or embarrass the executive, nor is it likely that any nation, much less the smaller, could ever decline to receive the blessing of peace, when the Sovereign should offer it:—any difference therefore of conduct in separate Legislatures, however unpleasant, could create no real difficulty there. Thus neither peace nor war necessarily requires the act of either Legislature, and their separate powers form no constitutional difficulty.

As to treaties, which neither concern peace or war, but are merely commercial, and therefore may require the aid of legislative acts to confirm them, or in other words, to impose duties, prohibitions, or restrictions in trade. I am not read enough in the Constitutional doctrine, on which the Executive can pledge itself to a foreign power, for any act to be done by the Legislature, of which it is only a third estate; but of this I am sure, there is not so much reason to apprehend that the Irish Parliament should differ from the British, as there is to suppose, that the British might differ from the Executive; the latter case is equally possible as the other; and not having ever been guarded against, and being indeed incapable of being guarded against, the former may safely rest on the same footing. The argument which suggests the difficulty is entirely theoretic, and many things which appear difficult, or even hazardous in theory, are not only safe, but even reconciled in practice.

Theory.

Theory says, the Parliament may disagree with the King in his declaration of peace and war, or in his treaties ; but in the course of the British history, how often has it disagreed, and have any, and what, national injuries followed such disagreement ? It would be difficult to find them ; never, I believe, since the Constitution has been the happy one it now is.

Theory says, the two Houses may, in legislative acts of material necessity, disagree with each other ; and therefore, would you venture to prevent the evil, by an absurd and impracticable attempt to force one to surrender its liberty to the other ; or in the fashionable phrase, by consolidating them both into one great mass of wisdom, united strength, and increased power ?

Theory, and theory only says, the same of the separate Parliaments of the two kingdoms ; and there is no one argument you can apply for the necessity of consolidating them, that will not apply much stronger for the consolidation of the two Houses in each ;—and the same arguments will all further apply, with equal strength, to consolidate the two Houses after such junction, with the King, as the third estate, for fear of the national concerns being impeded by their disagreeing with him, or he with them,—and thus your arguments will end in the absurdity, that you must consolidate the three estates of each kingdom into one, for fear of an inconvenience from a difference of opinion arising from the exercise of their free judgment ; that you must abandon the glorious Constitution of a mixed government, which you now enjoy, and adopt that of a single Monarch, or single power, wherever it may rest, either in a Monarch, or a Republick, or an Oligarchy. But practice, which is a more steady guide than theory, tells you
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the reverse. In points of peace and war, the Irish Parliament has never, even during centuries, differed in opinion from the British, though its power to do so has ever been as unlimited, and equally free before, as since the Constitution of 1782. No,—Interest is a sure guide to nations, and it never was, nor never can be the interest of the smaller number, to differ from the larger, of the weaker to differ from the more powerful on such a matter; and it is no rash prediction to say, that good sense and even necessity must soon reconcile the differing body, if unfortunately such an instance should ever happen.

But if we look into the principles of the British Constitution, we shall there find abundant reason not only to reject the arguments of such a theory as would consolidate the legislatures, but even not to adopt it if it were practicable. That Constitution was not the work of one man or of one age, it has gradually been softened down in the course of centuries into the perfection we now enjoy it, more by the collision of circumstances than by the efforts of human wisdom or foresight.

That collision has imperceptibly formed a balance in its constituent parts, which by the power of mutual checks, keeps each within its bounds, and preserves the whole in its true perfection.

That balancing check is the true principle to which it owes its preservation; destroy it, and the whole is gone. Is it wrong then to look to similar good effects from the same balancing principle in the connexion between the legislatures of the two islands, as in the connexion between the component parts of each legislature?

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If it keeps the three estates of Parliament together all in their just proportion in each kingdom, why not depend on the same principle operating the same way, and keeping the two legislatures of both kingdoms in their just relations to each other, so as that their mixed powers, like those of the mixed government, shall by their separate exertion so checked, preserve the symmetry and union of the whole machine of the empire, which a theoretic or unwise merging of the one into the other, might so affect as to render incapable of working?

No man is wise enough to foresee all the consequences of changing system even in small affairs, much less can he in such a stupendous work, as the constitution of a great empire; and if it goes on practically even with some, or if you please with great speculative imperfections; he is a rash statesman who would venture to change its progress, even on the plausible suggestions of a clear and persuasive theory; but here there is none such; and even if there were, how often is the best theory defeated by practice? We may find many instances; I will give you one. Juries from the vicinage are liable to all the prejudices, animosities, friendships, which those from a remoter country would be free from; and looking to the theory of justice only, we should never have chosen them from the neighbourhood, yet the experience of a thousand years thro' every change the constitution has undergone, has proved that the very matter from which we might have apprehended the imperfection of this mode of trial is its great and peculiar excellence. Mr. Pitt, on the same theory, tells us that our Parliaments may be influenced by local prejudices and partialities, from residing in the country, whose interests are to come before it, and therefore he would send those interests to a foreign Parliament, who know nothing of them

them nor can have the same means of knowledge I reply to him, that the practice of juries shews—that the local knowledge is the very essence of its capability to administer its functions.

It would be endless to run into all the cases wherein practice is a better monitor than theory—in none is it more so, than in the policy of governing mankind, and in no age or at no period is it more particularly worthy of being deemed so than in the present, when so many metaphysic researches and theoretic plans of meliorating governments and reforming systems which have stood the storms of ages, have convulsed and desolated the fairest countries of Europe. Look away then from the present project, however decorated with the powers of eloquence, and turn your eyes to the history and practice of your own country;—that country whose safety at this instant is endangered by a theoretic proposal to reform the system of its constitution, at the time that it is working with ease and increasing benefit.

Has the Irish Parliament in peace or war, or in treaties, since we have any records of its proceedings, clogged the progress of the Empire, by holding a different opinion from the British?—more particularly, since the restoration of its independence roused in it the pride, the spirit, and the sense of honour, which always attends true liberty, has it through peace, or war, ever differed from the British, or been less zealous in improving the one, and prosecuting the other?—From that period to this day the times have been peculiarly marked with great and trying events, and will afford us numerous examples of concurrence; none of difference, except you call the Regency such.—In every one then in which Ireland could shew its opinion,

nion, that opinion has been to support and strengthen Britain, to adopt the same regulations, to confer the same powers. Look to the many regulations in the commercial system, navigation act, manifest act, intercourse with the United States, treaty with France, expiration of the East India Charter and the arrangement of trade there.

But the noble Lord has told us the real motives of this scheme of Union, and I thank him for stating them so fairly. Ireland, he says, must contribute to every war, and the Minister won't trust to interest, affection, or connexion, for guiding her conduct. He must have her purse within his own grasp. While three hundred men hold it in Ireland, he cannot put his hand into it, they are out of his reach—but let one hundred of you carry it over and lay it at his feet, and then he will have the full and uncontrouled power.

What though you have given eight millions this year, a greater sum than any proportion of calculation calls for, yet it is no part of his finance system, and you may not do it hereafter when it might be a breach of trust in you to give it.

Finance so occupies his mind, that it is the ruling principle of all his measures, it attended the commercial system in the shape of a supply for imperial concerns—and if you could contrive now to give him the purse of the nation, without extinguishing your Parliament, believe me you would hear no more of Union. I respect him personally—I look on him as the greatest minister for finance that ever existed in any country, but in this fatal project of a Union, I do not scruple to say, he is the worst minister Ireland ever met.

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If a similarity of laws be, an essential means of Union, it is already attained and zealously continued by the voluntary acts of both kingdoms.—But the noble Lord wants more, he wants your purse and your trade, for the only question of imperial concern, (the Regency excepted) which he has stated, and the only one which Mr. Pitt, in his speech has attempted even to suggest, is this of war and treaty; and the only difficulty relied on, as to war, is the want of power to tax you, and the only legislative act for treaties is to restrain or regulate trade, and thus the whole truth is discovered.

He wants a Union, in order to tax you and take your money where he fears your own representatives would deem it improper, and to force regulations on your trade, which your own Parliament would consider injurious or partial.—I never expected to have heard it so unequivocally acknowledged, and I trust that it will be thoroughly understood, that it is not your Constitution he wants to take away for any supposed imperfection, but because it keeps the purse of the nation in the honest hands of an Irish Parliament.

I have mentioned the Regency in 1789. Unfortunate as it was that the two countries differed, the difference was not as to the person, but as to the limitations of power; nor was it properly speaking, the Parliaments that differed; it was the two estates, deprived of the third estate, which equally belonged to each Parliament, and in an instance wherein the controul of the British Council over that estate in its power of assenting or dissenting with the two houses of Ireland, was by the fatality of the case necessarily extinguished,—and I rely on it that if his Majesty's unfortunate illness had continued, all differences which marked the conduct of the two Houses here and those in Britain must have been

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done away, the moment that the controul I have stated should be established by the Great Seal being again put into exercise.

Let me again advert to this circumstance, for it is a most impressive proof of the efficacy of that connexion which the adjustment of 1782 established in regard to the Great Seal of Britain, and which I have detailed already.

It shews, that the only instance, which the advocates of Union produce, happened when the bond of Union which 1782 established, was suspended from operating; and this is a powerful argument in favour of this bond.

But I say, that no real difficulty does exist. For it is clear, notwithstanding what passed in 1789, that the act annexing the Crown in Hen. 8. extends to the person authorised by Britain to administer regal power, whether King, Queen, or Regent. At the Revolution, the British Parliament altered the succession to the Crown, and when the event took place, the successor became our Sovereign through their Act under ours of Hen. 8. and so would a Regent invested by them with regal authority become ours without any Act on our part. Our law of 1782 concerning the Great Seal puts it out of doubt; whoever is Regent of Britain has that Great Seal, the functions of the Irish Legislature must cease without its use, and therefore the Regent of Britain alone can represent the 3d estate of the Irish Legislature. The identity of the person, that the same person shall necessarily be the Regent in both kingdoms is the essential point—the Act of Annexation and 1782 secure this; and if local circumstance require any difference of power, either enabling or disabling, the Irish Parliament will be equally competent to establish it, under the

the Regent, as it is now to establish any difference if necessary under the Sovereign.

But suppose doubts still continue, may go farther, and suppose, contrary to all reason, that the present Bill cannot remove them, we should be idiots if we were for a casualty which may never happen, and for a disagreement which may not attend that casualty, and for the very slight, and trifling, and temporary, and theoretic inconveniencies which might be the consequences of such disagreement, to sacrifice our free Constitution, degrade the country into the state almost of a colony, and surrender that legislative independence which, in the very act of surrendering, we should shew ourselves unworthy of enjoying.

One argument which the advocates for the Union urge is, that it will augment the general force of the empire. Were it calculated to produce that effect, we ought to sacrifice much to such an attainment, but do they prove it? no, nor even attempt an argument, they give general terms, pompous phrases and unsupported assertions, and speak of us as if there were no Union, as if we were actually separate, and then attribute to their project every merit, every advantage which we now enjoy, as if they could confer them, and as if they did not exist. The case is, we are now united, so as if our whole strength is the strength of the empire. And as to resources against the enemy, the consolidation of both kingdoms is as firm as human policy and individual interest can make it.

Consider the measure what it really is, a merging of the Irish Parliament into the British, and the consequent removal of it to Britain; that is all, it is no otherwise a Union; it is simply the leaving Ireland without the residence of a Parliament.

ment. This is the whole of the mighty project which is to do such wonders, and in plain English the mighty wonder ends in this, to leave us in every respect exactly as we are, except as to our Parliament. Will its removal raise one soldier or one guinea more? will it encrease the capacity of doing either?—On the contrary, by debilitating Ireland, by debasing its spirit, and draining it of the leading fortunes and talents of the Country, by creating an encrease of absentees, by checking trade and manufacture, it must weaken our resources; and instead of the energy and zeal of a free people offering their lives and their properties, the empire will at most have the tardy and inanimated support of a dispirited and discontented province.

When Mr. Pitt says, If we were to ask the agent of our enemies, what measure would be most likely to render their designs abortive, the answer would be the firm consolidation of every part of the empire, I would bid him tell those enemies it is and has been consolidated, I would bid him do this, instead of holding us out as he does through his whole speech to the visitation of the enemy, by stating us as the vulnerable part of the empire, torn by contending factions. It is painful to go through all the phrases in which he insults our feelings, and which every Irishman knows not to be founded, I will omit repeating them, and ask you—Can we see in this repeated and open statement, the sound discretion which has marked his progress as a statesman in most of his other measures? He knew the assent of Ireland would be necessary to his present scheme, supposing it as salutary, wise, and practicable as he states it: should he then in common policy have held out our weaknesses even if real, and assert with all the impressive force of language that those weaknesses must continue if we should refuse our assent, before he knew we were ready to give it?

Providence

Providence has been often a kind friend to Ireland, and it is our good fortune now, that the enemy knows we are not in the state he paints us. They will not be imposed on—they know and feel that we are firmly united to Great Britain in affection and in interest, and they will pay no regard to the manner in which Municipal Laws cement or qualify that Union. If they have secret assistants in this kingdom, they are not so senseless as not to know that a roll of parchment won't change their minds, or remove them from the means of giving the expected aid;—on the contrary, if they entertain any hope of success, will they not think that the affections, interests, united resources, and united strength of those parts of the Empire, cannot be strengthened by such a roll,—but that the leaving so large a kingdom without a Legislature, whose energy they felt to their great discomfiture in their late attempts to promote rebellion, will give their secret friends more power to act? Was it wise by a hasty and immature proposal to risk the misconception which a watchful enemy might be led into, by an assertion that no real Union ever existed?

But the argument is still more inapplicable; the danger he threatens us with is instant; and the measure for our protection, the Union, must be a work of time. He tells the enemy the danger and the remedy, the danger immediate, the remedy distant. He destroys a Constitution which we hold, as the dear and sacred Palladium of our liberty, and would persuade the world there will be more zeal in Ireland, when that Constitution no longer shall remain, to animate its spirit and invigorate its exertions.

Another advantage mentioned by the advocates of the measure is still more strange, and if possible couched in more general

general terms without specifying any particular instance by which or on which the operation is to have effect.

That it will tranquillise Ireland.—It is again disgusting to me as an Irishman, to repeat all the insulting epithets and phrases with which he describes the state of this Country:—If a resident Parliament and resident gentry cannot soften the manners, amend the habits, or promote social intercourse, will no Parliament, and fewer resident gentry, do it? What is the great misfortune with respect to the tenantry of this kingdom? the middlemen, who intervene between the owner and the actual occupier, and these are mostly to be found on the estates of absentees. I have ever understood, that the example of the upper ranks, was the most effectual means of promoting good morals and habits among the lower orders; that their attention to the education, the health, and the comforts, as well as the protection they afforded the lower ranks, all which can only arise from residence were the surest mode of conciliating their affections, as well as improving their manners; that if every estate and every village afforded a benevolent protector, an easy and impartial dispenser of justice, and allayer of the little feuds which headstrong passions, untamed by education, are too apt to carry to the last excesses, the lower orders would learn not only obedience and veneration to the laws, but would feel an attachment to the country which afforded them such blessings—but it has remained for Mr. Pitt to advance a new system, that depriving a country of those persons whom I have described, encouraging land-jobbers and land-pirates, degrading the hospitality of the old mansion-houses into the niggardly penury of agent's dwellings, is the most approved, modern mode of making happy and contented tenants, of forming good men and good subjects.

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That the adding to the bishop's duty of attending to his diocese, the new and imperial duty of quitting the kingdom for eight months in the year, is the best way to make him acquainted with his clergy, and of enforcing their attention to their parishioners.

That a Parliament unacquainted with the local circumstances of a kingdom which it never sees—at too great a distance to receive communication or information for administering in time to the wants or the wishes of the people, or to guard against excesses or discontents, is more capable of acting beneficially than the one, who by being on the spot, and acquainted with the habits, prejudices, and disposition of their fellow subjects, best know how to apply relief.

But if we advert to the treasons and rebellions which have so degraded this Country, there we can apply to fact,—Could any Parliament sitting in Great Britain have developed the secret system of conspiracy, animated the loyal, and supported the executive, with the effect this very Parliament did? what would the ridiculous exhibition have been at that time, of a united Parliament walking through St. James's Park with their addresses, and yet what vigour and energy did the instant procession of near two hundred members with the mace to the castle, give to the loyal ardour of the country,—it animated the loyal spirit which crushed the rebellion before a single soldier could arrive from England, notwithstanding the uncommon exertions made there to expedite their sailing.

The extraordinary, but wise and necessary measure of proclaiming martial law, required the concurrence of Parliament to support the executive. The time would have ~~past~~ by, before that concurrence could have been asked for, and
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received from London ; and it would have given a faint support, coming from strangers, compared with the impression of its springing from Irishmen, all liable to every danger and inconvenience from its operation, and yielding themselves and their properties to its control.

Recollect the volunteers, the saviours of the Country and terror of its enemies ; when their great work was effected, and by the indiscreetness of a few leaders, their zeal was misled, and they began to exercise the functions of Parliament, we spoke out firmly—they heard our voice with effect, and took our advice in instantly returning to cultivate the blessings of peace. I ask you, would equal firmness in a Parliament, composed five parts in six of strangers, sitting in another country, have had the same effect ? You know it would not. Personal character, respect to individuals, opinion of their attachment to one common country, all impressed an awe which was irresistible.

But how has tranquillity been preserved in Britain ? Don't the secret reports shew that France has a sanguine hope of separating Scotland as well as Ireland, though she carries the charm of Union to protect her ; that even in England there are conspiracies, and I will put this question to any man who considers the reports of their Parliament and ours—have they probed the conspiracy to the bottom as we have done ? Is it a vain supposition, that if Scotland had had its Parliament sitting in Edinburgh, the conspiracy which spread so widely would have been sooner developed, and not shewn itself again there after it had been put down here ?

Need I go to more instances to shew you how tranquillity has been secured, and disturbances prevented by the interposition of this Irish Parliament which you are called upon for the sake of preserving tranquillity to transport out of your kingdom,

kingdom, to treat like the traitors and rebels who plotted to have destroyed your country? I feel it would be waste of time.—No, no, cherish the Parliament that was able and willing to save you. All natives of one country, their stake is in it; their hearts as well as their interests are engaged in its preservation, its prosperity, and its glory.

But you are to be improved into British manners and British customs! Idle talk; much as I admire Britain, I am not ready to give up the Irish character or to make a sacrifice for the change. But is it by Englishmen coming here that the change is to be effected? I answer, how will the transporting our Legislature, our men of fortune, and men of talents invite them? will men come with a view of profit to settle in a country, at a moment when the principal customers, who may be in their contemplation, are in the act of leaving that country and going to them? Look to the immense residence now in your kingdom from the unusual number of British officers, soldiers, and those of the English militia particularly, because the privates afford the example of manners and civilization to the classes which are in most want of them here. Will the Union bring so many or diffuse them so generally? in war they come without it, in peace they cannot come as soldiers.

Look to Scotland which has been united near a century, look to Wales which has been united above five centuries. Have English manners and English habits been able ever to get the English language into full use? and if they have not put down the native language, are new habits which arise from social intercourse to be communicated by persons who cannot understand each other when they speak? after forty years experience, they were forced to have recourse to the compulsion of law to put down the Highland dress, yet even that has been ineffectual to extinguish the national attachment to it, the truth is, the manners of a people can-

not be changed in a country suddenly. Great advances have already been made by wholesome laws towards meliorating them here; they have been for years in a state of progress towards improvement; this progress must not be hurried, or you check it. Encourage the residence of the rich, cherish and maintain that free Constitution, that Independence, without which no country is worth living in. In an island blest with soil, climate, and situation beyond most islands in the globe, industry and wealth must encrease, and if you will but abstain from experiment, civilization and meliorated manners will be the sure attendants.

He tells you, his project will diffuse British wealth, and induce British capital to settle here, but he does not tell you how or why, because he cannot. What practical difference in the actual state of the country will his Union occasion, to induce an Englishman to settle here, or what encouragement will it hold out to him, which is not at this very instant in existence? taxes won't be lowered; the whole object of the measure is to raise them; it has been explicitly stated so, and they are in a pretty rapid state of progression already. The same vague and idle bombast of expression, of assertion without proof, is made use of here.—Mr. Pitt says, it will give to Ireland the common use of the British capital—will identify Ireland with England, and so forth; these general unsupported expressions have no meaning, and we will examine the subject minutely.

I will first go through the particulars of the trade and manufactures of each kingdom to shew you the absurdity and futility of asserting, that a Legislative Union will bring capital into Ireland.

With regard to manufactures, those which employ the capital of Britain, and are of course the most profitable, are the Woollen, Cotton, Iron and Pottery. The two latter depend
so

so totally on plenty and cheapness of fuel, that they exist only in the coal countries, and have never have been known even in England to make what can be called a settlement at any distance from a plentiful colliery, and fire is so great a portion of their expence, that the part of the country which affords it best and cheapest, must have such a decided preference, as to induce any loose capital, if there be any such, to vest itself there. In the iron manufacture, Ireland has offered an encouragement superior to Britain. Her duty on imported iron is 12s. 6d. per ton, the British near 3l. which operates as a bounty of above 40s. a ton to the manufacturer in Ireland, yet this bounty has not brought capital into Ireland, and we must expect an equalization of those duties, when our legislature shall be extinguished, whereby this bounty will be extinguished also. The export of iron wrought to Ireland on the average of the last three years, was in value 119,000l. all subject when unrated to at least 12l. 14s. per cent. In the pottery too, the flint and clay which is so abundant in England has not yet been found in any quantity in Ireland, and in fact there is not a single pottery in Ireland.

It is self-evident, therefore, that these manufactures never can travel from the country which has the coal, to that which has it not, from Britain to Ireland. The same facility of fuel must give to Britain a decided preference in all manufactures, where steam-engines cheapen the price of labour.

As to the woollens, look at Yorkshire, their old and great settlement; though established there for centuries they have never travelled in any direction ten miles from the coal country. Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, and the circuit around the east north and south of the seat of manufacture, these support me in what I assert, as if nature had drawn a line
on

on the surface, as in the subterraneous stratum, and said, thus far shall you go, and no farther.

The late introduction of machinery by steam, which not only cheapens labour, but improves the quality beyond manual operation, adds argument to fact, and therefore we can never suppose sound speculation would send any capital to the distance of Ireland across the seas, when it has not sent it ten miles in England. But great as the consideration of fuel is to any man in forming speculations to extend himself in this business, there are others so obvious that they cannot be overlooked.

England finds a full call for all she makes, every year affords an increasing demand; suppose a man there speculates to vest more capital in the business; to settle a son; a nephew or a brother in it. Will he not prefer the extension on his own spot within his view, and under his direct controul, to attempting it in a new and distant country? but of all countries would he in common sense look to that which comes to him for the very goods he makes, which offers him their market at his own door, without trouble risk or change?

Would he not say to himself, the place I live in must make the goods as much cheaper than the Irish can, as the whole expence of carriage, and import duties which Ireland charges, will amount to.

He would find these duties 7d. a yard on old drapery or woollen cloth, operating as $8\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. on a cloth of 7s. 6d. a yard in value, and 2d. on new drapery, or stuffs, serges, durants, &c. operating as $8\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. on 2s. 6d. a yard, and he would naturally wish to see what great and countervailing inducements this measure of Union holds out to him before he ventures on his speculation. Suppose

pose he applies to the Minister for information, he will hear from him, 'it consolidates interest, it gives a full participation of all the commerce of Britain; it identifies the two countries into one; it diffuses common wealth,'—well, all this is fine language which I don't understand; but what does it do as to my trade? Is it to increase the duties there, so as to hinder more goods going from England? 'No, look to the 6th Proposition, they are never to be raised, and they are even to cease in time.'

Will it find fuel for me there? 'No.' What then does it do? 'Why it does every thing: it removes their Parliament here,'—worse and worse, he would say, I have found my trade nurtured and encouraged by Parliament, and you want to send me to a country without a Parliament, no. If you will send the British Parliament to Ireland, I might then think of going there, for where the Parliament is, there should the manufacturer be also: until then, you shall not induce me by imposing phrases to hazard my capital in a country, whose market I fully enjoy at my own warehouse, without offering me any one reason why my neighbour, whom I leave behind me, won't undersell me, even to my present customers there, as I now undersell all the Irish makers to them. No no, I see your plan, you want to impose on the Irish Nation. If they are fools let them be so, but I won't be your dupe, nor your instrument.

Suppose he were even to persist farther, and giving up the idea of supplying the home consumption of Ireland, he should look to supplying foreign markets from Ireland, when he should settle his capital, his machinery and his workmen here; he might say, you talked to me of Ireland's being to enjoy hereafter a full participation of the British commerce, and if I go there, I may export from thence. 'Yes that is one great advantage from the measure.' Then, I suppose the Irish are prohibited now from exporting
to

to foreign markets. 'No, they have had a full and free liberty to do so these twenty years past.' The Union then gives a bounty I suppose on export? 'No, that would be unfair,' and so you only offer me the same freedom which Ireland has enjoyed without avail for these 20 years past, and which I can enjoy from my own ports, and you don't remove the disadvantage which now enhances the price of the fabrick in Ireland so as to force her home market to be supplied from Britain, and which enhanced price must equally prevent her from meeting the British at a foreign market.

Were he further to look into the state of the trade and enquire into the progress of the export of woollen cloth from Ireland, he would find that in 1698, they exported 110,207l. in value (one-fifth of all their exports) and in 1798, 12,500l. only. — Were he to examine in Britain, it would appear that ten years ago she exported in woollen manufacture to the whole world 4,368,936l. in value and in the last year 6,836,603l. that out of the former there went to Ireland 353,781l. and out of the latter 580,723l. so that in ten years the encreased export was one-third to all the world, and more than one-third to Ireland. He would further find on enquiry that Ireland exported no unmanufactured wool; it worked up all it had, and there was little reason to suppose the quantity would be enlarged, as the great encrease of agriculture and of the linen manufacture gave a better profit in land than sheep afforded, so that Ireland could not even supply him with wool to work and if he were to ask the minister is British wool to follow him there, it is obvious what would be the reply.

Need I add further, to expose the absurdity of such a position as that of the Union bringing over British capital to establish Woollen, Iron or Pottery manufacturers? — The case of the Cotton is not less strong. We cannot even on the eastern coast of Ireland opposite the
British

British collieries make cotton twist within at least 20 per cent. as cheap as Britain can supply us, and we do not at this instant make sufficient for the necessary consumption of the kingdom.—Machinery is more used in this manufacture than the others, and one circumstance respecting it is worth observation: In Britain it was for years subject to a heavy charge, I have heard to 2s. 6d. a spindle annually, for Arkwright's Patent, from which it always was entirely free in Ireland; yet not a penny ever came from England to set up that machinery here, though the patent operated as a bounty to encourage the erection of it. I understand that patent has expired within these few years, and if no capital came, if no Englishman thought the speculation good while that bounty existed, it is nonsense to suppose he will think it a better speculation when the bounty has ceased. If the imports of British cotton manufacture were to be examined, it would appear that Britain in 1789 exported to Ireland to the value only of 32,500*l.* and in 1798, 107,293*l.* though subject to a duty of above 12 per cent in general.

But to save entering into more detail, I will adduce the arguments and authority of the same gentleman, Mr. Pitt, in 1785, though he now maintains a different opinion, and holds out the idle phrase of Diffusion of British Capital. In speaking of the memorable propositions he says:

'That besides the different degrees of the industry of
'the two nations, he was well informed and suf-
'ficiently convinced that the rate of wages as well as of la-
'bour, was greater in Ireland than in England, in any
'branch of manufacture which required execution and inge-
'nuity; instancing a gentleman whom he described to be the
'first and the principal person in the cotton business in Ire-
'land (Major Brooke) who was several times in danger of
'losing his life, because he refused to allow his workmen a
' greater

' greater price than they had at Manchester. He could not
 ' help observing, that the fears and apprehensions of the ma-
 ' nufacturers were extremely far fetched, and ill founded, nor
 ' did it appear to him that there were such grounds for them
 ' as ought to weigh with any reasonable man. They had
 ' declared themselves to be under great anxiety and uneasi-
 ' nefs, lest the Irish in consequence of this arrangement,
 ' should be able to draw over all their workmen, all their
 ' trade, and all their capitals, and be able to undersell them
 ' in their own markets by at least 13l. per cent. Now he
 ' desired the committee to attend to that single subject; the
 ' Irish cotton trade was to be imported into England accord-
 ' ing to this plan at 10 and one-half per cent. duty, and yet
 ' it was said they were to undersell the English manufacturer
 ' 13l. per cent. These two sums amounted to 23 and a half
 ' per cent; besides this, England had hitherto imported into
 ' Ireland at a duty of 10 and a half per cent; this, there-
 ' fore, added to the other two sums would amount to 34l.
 ' per cent.' And again, 'he most earnestly entreated the
 ' House not to suffer themselves to be carried away with the
 ' idea that a poor country, merely because she enjoyed some
 ' comparative exemption from taxes, was therefore able to
 ' cope with a rich and powerful country; the fact, he was
 ' ready to contend, was by no means so.'

I will to his authority add that of another gentleman, then a
 Commoner, now Lord Grenville, who, speaking of the opinion
 that the cheapness of provisions would enable the Irish to un-
 dersell the English manufacturer at his own door, said ' But
 ' the noble Lord (North) brought no proof of this, indeed it
 ' would have been wonderful if he had, for nobody knew
 ' where to find any such proof. On the contrary it had been
 ' proved at the bar by a very respectable gentleman, Capt.
 ' Brooke, who had set up an extensive cotton manufactory in
 ' Ireland, that he had always given the same wages that were
 ' given

"given at Manchester, and that he had on more occasions
 "than one, with difficulty escaped with his life from his
 "workmen, who had confederated in order to compel
 "him to raise their wages higher, than those that were
 "paid at Manchester. So far no greater cheapness of
 "labour appeared in one country than in the other, but
 "supposing the wages were somewhat lower in Ireland
 "than in England, he could not admit that, as a proof
 "that labour was in fact cheaper, for the true way to esti-
 "mate that point would be to see what work was done for
 "the money, and if the work was not proportioned or
 "equal to the price, then labour could not be said to be
 "as low as from the wages it might appear to be."

If then British capital wont come to establish those ma-
 nufactures in which Britain excels us, and supplies us, it
 will be fair to examine whether the Union will bring it
 to that Manufacture in which we do certainly undersell
 England, and possess natural advantages she does not,
 I mean the linen, for if British capital could be in-
 duced over, here is an article obvious to invite it.
 But what has been the fact? It has been free and
 prosperous for these ninety years, and has afforded
 many great fortunes to the industrious who have
 engaged in it; yet hardly any British capital has set-
 tled here in it. (I speak not of trifling capitals, nor of
 Wakefield or any other persons who have almost instantly
 disappeared) and if none have come to remain, while it has
 been cherished and supported by large grants and bene-
 ficial laws from the Irish Parliament, will it come when
 that natural and protecting guardian is no more? Will
 Mr. Pitt's threats to refuse it the British market induce
 settlers here? Will its great progress in Britain invite
 men to quit the profits it affords there, merely to
 make equal profits here? No, the fact of no British
 capital having settled here gives a stronger answer
 L than

than any arguments can, to all the idle theory that is held out to deceive us; and I will conclude this subject by observing that if British capital has not come here to a manufacture which we do work as cheap as Britain can, much less will it come to manufactures in which they undersell us in our own home in despite of duties and freight.

If then this foolish assertion, that the Union will induce Britain to vest her capital in this country on manufactures for home consumption, falls to the ground, we will examine whether it can induce them to do so for the supply of foreign markets, and one simple answer will be decisive, that if they can undersell us at home in any manufacture, they must do it abroad and therefore the speculation is absurd.

And it is equally absurd to suppose any will come to deal in foreign articles of import; but suppose a person willing to venture, he must import either for home use, or for re-export; if for home, instead of an acquisition he will be an injury by encreasing an import to the prejudice of our manufactures, and if for re-export, I might say with Adam Smith, there is little benefit thereby to Ireland, but let Mr. Pitt give him a full answer as follows:

To the question, is it likely Ireland is to become the emporium, the mart of the Empire, as it is said she would, he replies, "he did not believe that would ever be the case, by emporium he means, that Ireland would import the produce of Africa and America, afterwards to distribute it to all the world, and to Britain among the rest. No such consequence could arise, Ireland did not covet the supply of the foreign markets, nor was it probable that she would furnish Britain with the produce of her own colonies in any great degree. Ireland was to have the liberty of bringing to Britain

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" circuitously, what she herself had the liberty of bringing directly. It must be proved that Ireland could afford this circuitous supply, cheaper than Britain herself could give the direct supply, before any idea, or alarm, or apprehension could be raised in any bosom."

But we are told in the same glaring parade of general assertion that this project will give us a full participation of all the extended commerce, and with it of all the wealth of Britain, the greatest and proudest country under Heaven; that she offers a full partnership. Why Sir, this talk might do to People who are ignorant, but let me tell you and no man can contradict me, that we are as free to trade to all the world as Britain is at this moment, and that if the Minister was to ask me what benefit he could offer, what trade he could open, what manufactures he could promote, my answer, and I speak it from a firm conviction, would be this,—you can give us nothing, and my only request on the part of Ireland is, *that you will let us alone.*

I speak not of some few trivial articles which possibly, in hunting through the book of rates, might occur on paper, but they are very few if any, and of so little moment that they are not felt, for it would require a hunt to find them. What port in the known world can a British ship go to from Britain, that an Irish ship cannot go with the same cargo from Ireland? what article great or small can a British ship import into Britain or Ireland, that an Irish ship cannot import equally, into Ireland or Britain? I speak not of the East India settlements, though Ireland is as free to them as Britain is. What manufacture can Britain establish or encourage, which Ireland is not equally free by law to do. If new sources of trade shall be opened by conquest or by treaty, do they not belong equally, and at the same instant, to Ireland?

Ask these questions explicitly, and defy any man to shew an instance. In point of power to trade or manufacture, she can give us nothing, and so conscious is he of this, that in mentioning benefits, he relies entirely on continuing to us the undisturbed possession of what we enjoy, as if we were to pay him with the sacrifice of our Liberty, for his not doing us an injury.

Away then with his fine unmeaning words of a fairer and more perfect connection leading us to an equality of commercial advantages—and when he talks with such a proud contumely of the dependent nature of our commercial intercourse with Britain, as how the prosperity of our linen trade lies at the will of the British Parliament; that it rests upon its bounty, its discretion, or liberality; that the advantages we have gained for the last fifty years are falsely attributed to the Irish Parliament—and such stuff, I can hardly express my indignation. These humiliating assertions require a full answer, and I will give it; but let me distinguish between the Minister and the People of Britain. I have a strong feeling of veneration for the wisdom and liberality of the sister kingdom for these last twenty years—and I will never take the Minister's language as stating her sentiments, or the will of her Parliament, when it threatens us with hostile measures, if we don't surrender to him our Constitution. Her generosity and her justice, as well as her prudence and true interest, would stop his hand, if he were to attempt to raise it in the desperate attempt of crushing out prosperity. I lament he introduced the subject—it is not pleasant or wise in private life for two friends to enter into a detail of their mutual powers of benefit and injury, to taunt with obligations, and boast of the means to vex and harass, much less is it so between nations; but he has begun, and I will go through the whole state of our intercourse.

And first as to its general state, which, if I were to take from the Custom-house books, according to their accustomed valuation it would appear, that

Great Britain on an average
of three years to 1799, im-
ported annually from Ireland
to the value of

2,870,981*l*.

And exported to Ireland

2,775,330*l*.

Leaving a balance against Britain of 95,623*l*.

But fortunately an authentic paper has come to my hands; it was delivered lately to the British Parliament by Mr. Irwing, the inspector general of the British trade. The values in it are estimated by the price current of the article, instead of the Custom-house rate, and by the declarations of the merchants, on similar goods exported to other countries under the Convoy Act.

These values are stated to be about 70 per cent. in the gross above the rated value.

We will not enquire why this mode was adopted now, but if the value be fairly stated, it certainly is better to argue for present expedience on the present real state of trade than on a fictitious one, which might deceive us.

In it the statement appears as follows:

Imports into Britain from Ireland for the same average.

Value.

Linen, £2,600,101

Raw materials, provisions,

i. e. beef, butter, pork,

bacon, corn, 2,910,724

Total, 5,510,825

Foreign produce, 101,864

Total import,

5,612,689

Exports

Exports from Britain to Ireland,

British manufactures,	£1,640,195
Colonial do.	970,000
British raw material, including coals, hops, salt, and bark,	447,277
Foreign merchandize,	498,173
	3,555,645

Leaving an apparent balance
in favour of Ireland, of

2,056,824

But on examining the nature and amount of the several articles, we shall find, on a comparison of mutual benefit, that the balance is much in favour of Britain. To shew this, we will state the trade in three points of view, as it regards manufactures, raw materials, or articles of prime necessity, and foreign articles.

As to the first, the only article of manufacture exported from Ireland to Britain is linen, and in those exported to Ireland I include all East Indian and colonial produce, much of which is really manufacture, and the rest of which may be deemed so, on account of the employ of labour in the colony and of the shipping.

It will stand thus:

1. Manufactures.

To Ireland,

Manufactures of Britain,	1,640,195	}	2,614,000
Colonial goods,	970,000		

From Ireland, manufactures

2,600,000

Balance,

14,000

2. Raw

2. Raw Materials, &c.

Raw materials supplied by
Ireland to Britain, in-
cluding articles of prime
necessity, as beef, but-
ter, pork, bacon, corn,
&c. &c. 2,910,724

Raw materials supplied by
Britain to Ireland, in-
cluding coals, hops,
bark, salt, &c. 447,477

Excess of supply by
Ireland, 2,463,447

3. Foreign Articles.

Foreign articles taken by
Ireland from Britain, 1,468,173

Do. by Britain from Ire-
land, 101,864

Excess taken by Ireland, 1,366,309

Thus we see in manufactures the account is nearly equal, but in articles of necessity and raw material, the balance of supply is very great to Britain, and in the foreign articles, or carrying trade, the excess of gain to Britain must appear prodigious, if we consider that 407,000*l.* of it only is East Indian, and of course 1,061,173*l.* is open to be imported direct to Ireland, were she obliged or inclined to import it so. Sugar alone amounts to 505,000*l.* and I must observe to you, that all the East and West Indian articles in this statement, about 930,000*l.* are the means of Britain's re-mitting home so much of her foreign wealth, and our taking them is consequently of great moment to her,
exclusive

exclusive of her profit on the manufacturing or raising, and in the shipping, they employ.

To complete the comparison, we must add the monopoly we give to the produce of her Colonies as well in the part stated to be received from thence, as in all that we import directly, which amounts to about 140,000*l.* a year for the above average, making in the whole the produce of the British Colonies, imported directly and indirectly—660,000*l.* a year. All of which, if rash councils should ever unfortunately compel us to take them from foreign Colonies, might not only be paid for by our linens, but a very extended and beneficial market might be opened thereby.

I have detailed these statements accurately from the printed report, and you see the advantage of arriving at truth by such a detail; for if the gross amount only of these imports and exports be stated without attending to the nature of the articles, it would appear, as I before said, that the trade was greatly against Britain—whereas this statement shews us clearly that the trade is mutually beneficial, more so perhaps to Britain, but certainly so much so as to put an end to all the foolish threats which have been made, particularly as to our Linen Trade, depending wholly on British bounty and British discretion.—

I acknowledge the value of the market which Britain affords us for our linens, and I am ever willing to take every act of her's as a favour and mark of friendship; but when he asserts our linen trade depends on the British Parliament, I must examine the subject minutely.

He relies on two British measures to support him in this assertion.

1. The British Duties on the foreign linens.
2. The British Bounties on the export of Irish linens.

When

When he says the former were imposed for our sake, I must reply that the fact is otherwise, and I appeal to the Report of the British Board of Trade, in the British Journals in 1698, to which the great authority of Mr. Locke's signature appears: and when we are insultingly told that we are indebted to the British Parliament for our linen manufacture, I reply, Britain is bound in every instance to encourage our linen trade, by compact so strongly manifest in the proceedings of both Parliaments, as cannot be denied.

We gave her a valuable consideration in putting down our woollen trade, laying 20 per cent. on its export, and in prohibiting our wool to all countries except Britain. The value of our woollen export then was, as I have stated 110,000*l*. (one-fifth of our whole exports.)

But to return to the British duties on foreign linens. Many petitions in the British Journals shew they were granted to protect the British linen manufactures and the trade of British drapers in Irish linens. The Scotch in those petitions state the linen as their staple, and Mr. Dundas measures the wealth of Scotland by its increase since the Union.

The various Reports in the same Journals shew it is a rising and valuable manufacture to Britain: these duties on foreign linen, therefore, so far as protection goes, are as desirable to her as to us, and were imposed for her protection first, and continued since for the general benefit.

As to the bounties on exports, by which he vauntingly asserts the Linen Trade of Ireland has been brought to its present height; they were not given for us, nor were they suggested by us; the British Journals state them to have originated in a petition from London traders and the manufacturers of Scotland. They were granted in preference

ference to refusing drawbacks on the foreign linen which was the plan suggested, and in which no benefit to the Irish, was in contemplation; so far from it, the bounties extended to Irish linens, were confined to the property of persons *residing* in Great Britain till 1780, because they were intended for the benefit of the British merchant, and to prevent the direct export of linens from Ireland.

The Report of the Board of Trade, of which Lord Auckland was a member in 1780, upon the bill which I introduced here to grant similar bounties on export from Ireland, affords us decisive evidence on this head.

The Report says, “ we see with some regret an experiment of similar bounties in Ireland on Irish linen, tending to interrupt and hazard a great branch of the commercial intercourse between the two countries, which has been highly and reciprocally advantageous; we are convinced too, that this new speculation, so far as it succeeds, will operate to the diminution of our export trade, to the diminution also of the returns for that trade, and consequently to the prejudice of our navigation, and commercial interests in general; but we cannot think that such mischiefs are suddenly to be expected to any considerable extent.”

Again.—“ We submit to your Lordships that as far as the direct export of Linen from Ireland may take place in consequence of the bounty proposed there, in so much will our exports be affected, and the detriment resulting to our general trade from that circumstance will be increased by the returns made for exports, and by all the collateral consequences of a proportionable transfer of our navigation and general commerce to the ports of Ireland.”

In

In the same paper it is also stated, "That though
 " Great Britain carried on her Linen trade, subject to
 " great and irremovable disadvantages, she is supposed to
 " manufacture more linens than are exported from
 " Ireland."—And with regard to the bounties, "They
 " have been the means of forcing forward an exten-
 " sive Linen Manufacture in Britain, though struggling
 " under a great disadvantage as to the growth and supply
 " of the raw material."

Till I brought forward the measure of Irish bounties, Britain never would let us pay bounties for them from our own ports, and she was at the expence of them from her own ports to secure to herself the benefits of trading in our linens. Were a kindness to our manufactures the object, she should have let us pay them.

When their operation is boasted of by Mr. Pitt, as having raised our manufacture to its present height, he forgets the fact—They took place in 1743, and operated, as the Report I have mentioned, states, as 12 per cent. on British, and $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. only on Irish, the remaining $5\frac{1}{2}$ compensating the charges of freight, commission, &c. from Ireland to Britain. By this unequal encouragement, the export of British bounty linens rose in 1763 to be equal to that of Irish; since which time the export of British has so increased over the Irish, that the bounties paid by Britain on her own linen in 1797, came to 82,935*l.* exclusive of a farther sum of 56,935*l.* on linen and cotton printed, which was entirely confined to British, making all together on British, 139,970*l.* and on Irish to 24,459*l.* only.

Let me further tell you that they did not, at an average cost 10,000*l.* a year from 1742 to 1771, and that this 24,459*l.* in 1797, was given on the export of about 3,000,000 yards, and this is the mighty sum,

and this the mighty quantity, by which the linen trade of Ireland has been brought to its present height.

When he holds out a threat by talking of the foreign linens, and insinuates Great Britain loses revenue by not imposing import duties on ours, I would tell him we know it is an idle threat, and that the British nation will never consent to a war of Prohibitions or Duties, between the two kingdoms, the two great limbs of the same empire, to gratify his speculations; should such a hostile measure seriously engage his mind, I would advise him to reflect, that Great Britain cannot make linens equal to her demand, that if by such a measure the import of Irish were to be checked, that from Germany and Russia must be increased; and the British consumer would pay the tax to the state, and his money to a stranger. But should it happen not to check the Irish—Britain who would pay the tax on them, not we, should be the losers. And if he entertains a hope to increase the British manufactory thereby, he will find it vain, for the capital and the hands of England are so fully employed by the immense increase of demand from all the world almost, that there is none to spare; he cannot therefore turn more to linen, without withdrawing from other fabrics.

He seems to have got into a labyrinth on this subject; his mistakes and threats are very curious; he says Great Britain takes from Ireland, manufactured produce, to the amount of between four and five millions, whereas even the British statement at the price current makes the linen 2,600,000, and it is the only manufactured produce.

He says our Linen constitutes four-fifths of our exports to all the world; but our Irish books state the linen not to be one half, and the British paper shews that what linen goes to Britain, who takes, as he says, seven-
eights

eights of all our linen, is not one-half even of our exports to her,—if then 2,600,000*l.* the nett value of linen sent to her is not four-fifths of 5,600,000*l.* our whole exports to her, much less can it be four-fifths of our exports to all the world.—When he says all articles essential to trade, to subsistence and raw materials are sent free of duty, he forgets the fact.

Nor can I leave unnoticed his quotation from me in 1785. The language, I used then, did state the advantages to Ireland from her situation and trade with Britain, and I did urge this house to secure the continuance of them. I thought a Minister might one day appear, who might threaten a war of duties and prohibitions, and I wished to have the security of a legislative compact, but I never thought that that Minister would be the one I was then co-operating with. I was speaking to Ireland only, had I been speaking to England I should have stated to them the advantages they derived from their trade with us. This was his business to do, not mine. We were working together in one cause to effect the measure of the propositions, and when Mr. Orde was attacked, he defended him by shewing the distinction between himself and Mr. Orde, “that it was necessary for the latter to state the advantages which would result to Ireland, whereas he had only to prove they could be given without detriment to Britain.” Why does he decline to hold out the same shield for me, instead of the unprovoked attack which pervades so much of his speech? But I don’t ask for his shield; every thing I said then, I could now with perfect consistence repeat. Coals, hops, bark, and rock-salt, are of equal value to us now as then. The whole export of articles in the nature of raw materials, at an average of

of the three last years, including them, was in value 447,477*l.* stated at the price current. I need not repeat how inferior that whole amount is to the articles of raw materials which we send in return, 2,910,724*l.* in value; nor do I hesitate again to say that those four articles are of great and essential consequences to us—but I will not submit to any threat on their account, and much less to a sacrifice of constitution, which even then I refused to barter for trade.

Should rash counsels, forgetting the advantages of friendly intercourse, attempt to prohibit or clog them with duties, which no man in either country deprecates more sincerely than I do, necessity may compel us to search for coal, which exists in Ireland, but which we have never looked for effectually. It would not take many years with proper and regular application, to supply ourselves with bark, nor perhaps with hops—and salt can be got.

Such rash counsellors should learn to dread the consequences of changing the course of manufactures, by forced measures, and that four million and a half of people will not remain idle.

Let them reflect that England raised the woollen manufactory here, by prohibiting the importation of Irish provisions, and she established the woollen manufactory afterwards in France, by destroying the child of her own creation in Ireland. Should she attempt and prevail in prohibiting our linen to her ports, it is impossible to foresee what ports we may find, what returns we may get, and in those, how much of what she now supplies us with, may be included. We know our linens beat the German, and the Russian, in the American market—they are preferred even to the Scotch, and no nation can bring the fabrick to the perfection we do—not so much perhaps from superior skill, as from the peculiar fitness of our climate

climate for bleaching, which gives a pleasing whiteness and durability that no other bleached linen possesses.

We know that Spain and Portugal consume an immensity, not only at home, but in their extended colonies, which their fabrics don't furnish, and which we were beginning to supply. In no place are we protected against German linen, except in Britain, and yet ours is finding its way almost every where.

The British duties on foreign linens are stated to be 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per cent. Does he know when he threatens us with that duty, that at this instant Irish linens have risen 35 per cent. above their usual value? And yet the British merchants are so anxious to purchase them, that they are even securing them on the Greens, before they can go to market. I acknowledge this is a temporary circumstance; but it serves to shew that as far as 35*l.* is more than 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*; the Irish linens do not monopolize the British market by means of the duty, and could at present find their way there, even if there was no duty on the foreign. In his general assertions he forgets that though the Irish and foreign fabrics bear the general appellation of linen, much of the Irish is of a quality no other nation could furnish, and no duties could make the British, who are used to Irish shirting, relish the wear of German fabric.

But I will call Lord Grenville to my aid on this part of the subject, and I cannot use stronger arguments, more forcibly expressed. He said in 1785, "If England should prohibit the importation of linens, the noble Lord thought Ireland would retaliate only by prohibiting the exportation of provisions. But here the noble had surely forgot the evidence that had been given at the bar, where it had been asserted, that the raw materials of many of the great manufactures of England were brought from Ireland.

"Should

“ Should the latter then prohibit the exportation of
 “ them, what would become of the English manufactures?
 “ Should she prohibit the exportation of woollen yarn,
 “ how greatly would the staple manufacture of this coun-
 “ try suffer. Should she do the same with respect to raw
 “ hides, the different branches employed in the leather
 “ trade of Britain would be utterly undone.”

Again—“ He observed that however fortified the noble
 “ lord might think this country against any hostile pro-
 “ ceedings of the Irish merchants, by the power which
 “ she had of prohibiting the importation of Irish linens,
 “ this was no security, because such a prohibition would
 “ operate as much against England as Ireland, and ultri-
 “ mately more, because by that means we should be in-
 “ jured in the article of our shipping, and lose the carry-
 “ ing of the Irish linens to the foreign markets. Nor
 “ would this be the only bad consequence, this car-
 “ rying trade being thus thrown into the hands of the
 “ Irish, they would thereby contract habits of inter-
 “ course with the states of America, and with other fo-
 “ reign nations that would by degrees undermine us in
 “ our trade to these countries.”

To quit the subject of linens, if we look to the British
 trade in general, Ireland is not such a customer as
 Britain should quarrel with. In 1797, the export of her
 manufactures to Ireland, was - - 1,310,996*l*.
 and to all the rest of Europe - - 3,870,335*l*.
 including Guernsey, Jersey, Isle of Man, and Greenland;
 so that the Irish market alone was equal to one-third of
 all Europe.—I state the year 1797, as it is the latest I
 have seen the accounts of, and you will observe, it is
 from the Custom-house value which serves every pur-
 pose of proportion or comparison.

It is to be lamented that Mr. Pitt has, by his threats,
 begun this discussion. I know that it is in the power of
 Britain

Britain to injure this country for a time, by a war of duties and prohibition—he need not tell us so—America affords ample proof; but she must herself suffer in the contest, and I have no fear that she will give her assent to such hostilities—her wisdom, her liberality, her own interest would forbid it.

The inferences which Mr. Pitt and I draw from the consideration of our mutual trade, are very different—I wish to shew from it, that we are of mutual use, and ought to assist each other. His arguments tend to shew he can commit hostilities in trade, he states our advantages, to threaten us with a deprivation of them. I stated them to shew our interest in maintaining them. But let us turn to the more pleasing view, where the detail of our mutual powers of trade, and of our actual state of intercourse, holds out the mutual benefits we can confer on each other, by reciprocal preference and amity. Let us look to those benefits, and protect them from the danger which this measure of a Union threatens, for I have said, and I repeat it, that it would injure our trade and manufactures, instead of serving them, and I will now prove it.

If it takes, as it must do, a great portion of the men of property to England, the manufacturers will be deprived of their best customers to the extent of what they heretofore spent. If it increases the absentees, it will reduce more estates to the miserable state of uncultivation in which theirs generally are—and it is morally certain that every member chosen to an United Parliament will be a new absentee—in county elections and popular boroughs at least, for no man, now an absentee, can expect to be chosen—and that every member must be a man of considerable property, is equally probable, because no other could bear the expence of parliamentary attendance.

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But

But this is not all—the articles of Union propose a possible period at which the duties that at present afford a sort of protection to the manufacturer, are to cease. Is there no danger then that the further expenditure of money may cease immediately, that individuals will look to winding up their business, in order to withdraw their capital against that period—for all idea of permanency of protection being done away, its effect becomes temporary and unavailing.

Again—our import duties on some raw materials, are fitted to our infant state. Iron we import at 12s. 6d.—Britain imports it at near 3l. Every man concerned in the iron manufacture here, must expect the United Parliament will put these duties on a level.

They may expect the same as to raw silk for which we pay, on import about one half the duty they pay.

Further, the farmers, whose spirits we have raised by our corn laws, must look with uncertainty to the continuation of the bounties they afford—and expect the principles on which those bounties were discontinued from one part of the kingdom to another, and from the whole of it to Dublin, will be extended on a similar reasoning by the United Parliament to the whole of the United Empire.

But the evils will extend still further—What security will the nation feel in any thing, when it loses the protection of its Parliament—whose competence to support and protect them, they have found effectual proof of, on all occasions.

Every law, every regulation which you now value and rely on, will be subject to repeal, not by a Parliament whose knowledge and attachment you can confide in, but by a foreign one, to which access will be difficult, communication expensive, and who cannot know the local grounds which gave rise to them.

Few

Few mercantile men will be able to represent you in an United Parliament, their business wont allow them to go out of the kingdom for eight months, though they could with ease attend in Dublin from any part of Ireland; neither can you avail yourselves of the constitutional knowledge of lawyers, for they must give up their profession to go there, and you will all agree that in the present question they have stood forward nobly.

New laws equal in appearance and in phrase, may be very unequal in effect, to countries differently situated. I will instance taxation laws.—Ireland is a young country, rising and likely to rise in wealth; it is her best plan to borrow money, instead of raising an annual income to bear the war expences, because the certain prospect of her encreasing prosperity gives a moral certainty of her paying the debt gradually, and an encrease of annual taxes to the necessary arrears, might curb her enterprize. Britain is at maturity; the state of warfare has thrown the trade of the world into her hands, and there is no reason to expect it will encrease upon a peace; perhaps the speculation of its decrease might not be chimerical; she therefore should take advantage of her temporary affluence, and by annual taxes, not by borrowing, make it support the yearly expences of the war: a system, therefore, of taxation for the whole expences of the year, though equal in appearance, would be very unequal in effect.

A further discouragement must arise from the people feeling that their prosperity and happiness will be given back again to the controul of a British Parliament whose partial conduct against this country, until the constitution of 1782 gave freedom to our Parliament, and with it the power of protection, Mr. Pitt has described in language so particularly forcible that I will read it to you, “ he bids the com-

“mittee recollect, that from the revolution, to a pe-
 “riod within the memory of every man who heard
 “him, indeed until these very few years, the system
 “had been that of debarring Ireland from the enjoy-
 “ment and use of her own resources, to make the
 “kingdom completely subservient to the interests and
 “opulence of this country, without suffering her to
 “share in the bounties of nature, in the industry of
 “her citizens, or making them contribute to the gene-
 “ral interests and strength of the empire, this system
 “of cruel and abominable restraint had however been
 “exploded. It was at once harsh and unjust, and it
 “was as impolitic as it was oppressive; for however
 “necessary it might be to the partial benefit of districts
 “in Britain, is promoted not the real strength of the
 “Empire. That which had been the system counter-
 “acted the kindness of providence, and suspended the
 “industry and enterprise of man. Ireland was put
 “under such restraint, that she was shut out from every
 “species of commerce. She was restrained from send-
 “ing the produce of her own soil to foreign markets,
 “and all correspondence with the colonies of Britain
 “was prohibited to her, so that she could not derive
 “their commodities but through the medium of Britain,
 “this was the system which had prevailed, and this was
 “the state of thralldom in which that country had been
 “kept ever since the revolution.”

Again—“Ireland had for a long series of time felt the
 “narrow policy of Britain, who, influenced by views of
 “trade and commercial advantages, and tainted and per-
 “verted with selfish motives, had treated her with partial-
 “lity and neglect, and never looked upon her growth
 “and prosperity, as the growth and prosperity of the
 “empire at large.”

Mr.

Mr. Grenville's expressions too are strong:

“ If England was heavily taxed, she had now, and
 “ had had the benefit for a whole century past of a
 “ widely extended trade, from which she had excluded
 “ Ireland—and the latter had already given to England
 “ all that she would have made, if by a barbarous and
 “ equally absurd policy she had not been debarred from
 “ those advantages that God and Nature had given her.”

If any man says that this Union does not bring us back under the controul of the British Parlinment, because we shall have the mockery of 100 representatives to sit among 558—I answer, it is a mere imposition, a play on words. Is there a man can doubt that 100 must yield to 558, and that our sending such a shadow of representation, will only give legal form to the power of the 558 to tax us; How can their feeble voices be heard, if the others choose not to listen; but if you want proof, Scotland affords it; tradition says, all her representatives joined in a motion to dissolve the Union, and they were overcome.—Virtually, and to every practical effect, therefore, this projected Union will put us back again even into a worse state of dependance than we were in before 1782, into that miserable, abject situation which, in Mr. Pitt's words, “ counteracted the kindness of Providence, and suspended the industry and enterprise of man, which debarred us of those advantages that God and Nature gave us,” with this difference, that we should then be legally bound by our own act which we could not get rid of, whereas before 1782 we never acknowledged the old usurpation, and we had a Parliament which rescued us from it.

Perhaps you would depend on the articles you may frame to secure your trade and your purse; but you must recollect, that if the doctrine of the omnipotence of Parliament be just (and it has strong advocates),
 it

it will extend to the United Parliament, who will have the power therefore at it's pleasure to alter any act of the Union itself—and you must see, that as no article, so neither will the whole of the Union exist longer than while it is beneficial to Great Britain; but it will exist for ever though Ireland find it injurious to her interest, the power of extinction resting in a Parliament composed of 558 British and 100 Irish members—and even should the Union cease to exist, are you sure that you can or will be restored to the free and independent legislature which you are now called on to abandon.

Observe also, as I before stated, that the disavowal of the compact of 1782 must create a suspicion that any compact made in 1799 may be treated as lightly.

But look to Scotland, we shall there see that time and circumstances have set aside the great beneficial difference in taxation which induced that kingdom to consent to Union. Her lands were to pay only about one-fortieth part, or rather less, of the British land tax, but by annihilating the measure of a land tax, another is raised by the name of an income tax; that is, *instead of taxing the land, the income arising out of that land is taxed*, and estimating Scotland in her income at one-eighth of England, as Mr. Pitt has done, her lands will pay henceforward one-eighth instead of one-fortieth of what those of England do. I am far from insinuating that this measure is a breach of any article in the Scotch Union, or that it was intended even to evade it; on the contrary, I mention it to shew how futile any language in which articles of Union can be expressed, may be rendered by the accidents of time and unforeseen circumstances, and that the effect is the same to the Scotchman as if the articles of Union were broken.

If I asked what security will the nation have when it loses the protection of its Parliament, of whose competence to protect, effectual proof has been given?
the

the obvious answer would be, that all security will be annihilated, when we lose our own, which is both competent and effectual—it and not the British Parliament has raised our staple trade to its present great height.

It gave the export bounties which besides the benefit of navigation, has put our linen trade on equal footing with the British, whereas till then our linen was exported from Britain, as the Lords of the Council have stated, under a disadvantage of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Recollect when the Executive was unable to procure for you, the full participation of the Methuen treaty with Portugal, and lamented the delay; your Parliament stepped in, and by its vigour and decision compelled Portugal to submit to your just claims.

Recollect, when during forty years your victualling trade had been harassed and restricted by 24 embargoes, one of which lasted three years, where did you find relief? Your Parliament took up the subject, the embargo ceased, and none has appeared to oppress you from that day. Your Parliament gave you bounties to promote your agriculture, which have maintained and enriched you ever since; it gave you the octennial bill which first infused the spirit that animated its exertions to demand and obtain for you a free trade and a free constitution, the ever sacred and prosperous constitution of 1782.

After these incontrovertible proofs that the Union must injure Ireland: were I to select the place in the kingdom which is least capable of receiving benefit, and most capable of suffering injury by a Union, it is Cork and the country around it.

The only manufactures in which any successful attempts have been made in or near Cork, and those not extensive, are the woollen and the cotton; but I have shewn you that no manufacture of woollen or cotton can

can be promoted any where in Ireland by the measure. And I have shewn you too, that a Union can no way increase the powers or capabilities of export or import. In manufacture therefore, or in import or export, the Union offers nothing to Cork—and that Cork cannot be an emporium or depot for storing foreign goods, Mr. Pitt has shewn clearly, in the quotations I have made from him, wherein he exposes the folly of Ireland's entertaining such a hope.

In these respects, then, a Union offers nothing; but perhaps some may represent to themselves that the establishment of a naval dock-yard would be the consequence? In return, I ask, What could induce the establishment of a dock-yard after a Union more than before? or, What has hitherto prevented it, but that it did not appear to be a useful or desirable situation? However, suppose they persevere, if they look at Plymouth, Portsmouth, &c. the latter, one of the best situations in Britain for commerce, they will see that no trade exists where those great naval dock-yards are established; and if they look at Milford-Haven in Wales, a glorious harbour, yet as a place of naval resort, much abandoned, they will find, I believe, that any trade which it may have formerly enjoyed, has not returned to it. Let them look at Scotland, has the Union in the course of a century caused a navy dock-yard to be established there? What hope, then, can Cork entertain? Its situation was always the same it is now; and the fact must be, that it is no desirable one for the purpose, or the great attention of the various successive Ministers of Britain to the naval strength of the empire, would long since have taken advantage of it.

I would bid the people of Cork recollect that their two great and enriching articles of export, corn, and provisions may be deeply endangered by the Union. Their corn trade has encreased the agriculture in that province

to a great extent; should the alteration of bounties follow the measure, which I have stated rational grounds for apprehending, they will lose not only the internal benefits which agriculture has lately begun to let them taste the blessings of, but with them all the advantages of the corn trade. Nay more, there is a further value to them in agriculture, from the turn that has taken place, and is likely to encrease in the demand for provisions; I mean the preference that is given to pork over beef. Pork depends on agriculture; and those gentlemen of Cork who export provisions, lately experienced as I believe, the truth of this assertion; for, if I am not mis-informed, the demand for Irish pork was much lessened by the stoppage of the distilleries in Britain having induced the farmers there to fatten pork; nor did the demand return to its usual course here till the distilleries were allowed to work again; therefore if agriculture decreases, they may bid farewell to the pork trade, which will go along with it.

Let Cork advert to the other branch of their provision trade, beef. I have already mentioned Embargoes; and it is in the recollection of many merchants there, how often their interests used to be sacrificed to the advantage or avarice of British contractors, and how the trade was almost annihilated by the continuance of one embargo for three years, they know how vain were all their applications for redress until the Parliament, which they are now invited to extinguish and banish from the land, took up their cause and by its bare interference, not only put an end to it, but has prevented the renewal of any such injustice since. Let even those who don't agree with me in these apprehensions, consider that it is possible they may not be altogether ill-founded; let the people of Cork see that no temptation is held out by the Union to induce them even to hazard the possibility

possibility of danger, that they are thriving rapidly, and safety advises them to rest content and not to try experiments, and more particularly such as will be without remedy if they prove injurious.

I have often mentioned and reminded you, of the prosperous and rising state of this kingdom; you all must know it, but I will not rest the fact as my own assertion. I will give you an authority, you must acknowledge your own unanimous address in July last to the present viceroy, wherein you say, 'that under his Majesty's benevolent auspices his kingdom of Ireland had risen to a height of prosperity un-
' hoped for, and unparalleled in any former era; that our
' commerce had been largely extended, our Constitution
' highly improved, and every class of subjects conciliated by
' the most liberal acts of concession and indulgence.'

Are you going to give up that Constitution almost at the moment you have declared it highly improved.—Do you want to be better than well? Take caution from the history of that foolish man who was well, would be better, took physic, and died.

But we are triumphantly told of the example of Scotland, and the great advantages she has derived from the Union; I say there is no similarity in our situation and hers; she was connected with England only by the accidental circumstance of the Crown of England having descended to her monarch, in all other respects she was as foreign as Hanover to England.

By this junction of the crowns she lost the residence of her monarch, and became subject to foreign influence in all her national concerns; depressed in her trade, in every thing

thing of value to her state, she was gradually declining as a nation from that period.

Scotland had no constitution like Britain—her two houses sat together, and the representatives of the people did not hold the purse of the nation—her king by his power of creating peers could at any day overpower the voices of the Commons by numbers, just as the 558 British members could overpower our pitiful 100 delegates—her parliament even with this imperfect constitution had not a deliberative power; it could discuss no subject but what was previously prepared by the Lords of the Articles, somewhat as ours was limited by Poyning's Act to whatever the Privy Council should think proper to point out. Moreover the two kingdoms had no affection, but much national dislike and prejudice towards each other, they never had been good neighbours, and the Scotch feelings had been particularly roused by many recent circumstances; she was the only maritime state without settlement or trade beyond Europe, and therefore had made a great effort in 1696, to establish a colony at Darien, and formed a company by Act of Parliament and Royal Charter for trading to Asia, Africa, and the Indies. The Parliament of England took alarm and addressed the King, and the company was broke in 1699, by the interference of Britain getting the subscriptions at Amsterdam, Hamburgh and elsewhere withdrawn; by prohibiting the American colonies from holding any correspondence with the Scotch, who had actually made the settlement, and by encouraging the Spaniards to attack it: the unfortunate colony was of course soon destroyed,—and the Scotch Nation saw with mortification many of their nobles slaughtered at Darien, 400,000*l.* of property destroyed and their hope of an extensive foreign trade annihilated. It is no wonder such proceedings should hurt their

their feelings towards England, and the utter demolition of this Darien company, though encouraged by their King at first, shewed them their own desperate situation and the predominant and injurious effects of English power; those feelings still increased until they broke out in 1704 by their passing an Act of Security whereby England and Scotland were to be legally disjoined so soon as Queen Anne should die; this Act ordered Fencible troops to be raised, armed and trained.—They also passed an Act for the export of their wool to France which was then at war with England.

This conduct was followed on the part of England by severity and intimidation; an Act appointing commissioners for a Union was passed, it enacted the Scotch to be aliens, forbidding arms and ammunition to be exported into Scotland, and prohibiting the import of their cattle, which were five-sixths of their whole export, and the import of their linen and their coals, until they should settle the crown as Britain had,

Their trade had been lucrative with France and Holland—the English admiralty ordered cruisers to seize their ships—the lords addressed for troops to be sent to the Frontiers—hostilities were on the point of commencing and they had no means of prevention; being no part of the British Empire; they must see that the becoming a part would be a sure remedy—devoid of a constitution worth preserving, they might see a glorious acquisition in obtaining the British, in short they might see that in a Union they would obtain what they never before had enjoyed, a free constitution, and with it an equal administration of justice, which also they had been deprived of in some degree by their Privy Council.

They

They had every disadvantage of an unequal and very imperfect connexion with a powerful and a jealous rival, they had much to gain and little to lose, their situation at the time also rendered them susceptible of peculiar benefits—low in manufacture, cramped in trade, they must see happiness in an offer of being incorporated with a nation rich in trade and manufacture.—Scotland could not long hesitate to accept a share in all the benefits of a great and encreasing commerce, not one atom of which she could otherwise enjoy. Nature too seemed to point out to the inhabitants of the same island, to cease their mutual jars and become one people, and if Munster was a distinct kingdom in this island, situated as Scotland was, I should be a strong advocate for Munster's uniting with the rest of the island. But look at our situation,—a constituent part of the empire, we enjoy all its various branches of trade, and have a right to and receive its protection; separated by nature by the Irish channel, the two kingdoms have not been subject to the incursions, and deadly hates and animosities which distracted Scotland and England—we are not only united to the crown, but to the empire inseparably, our friends, our enemies always the same, and our interests as well as our laws binding us in that Union.—We have long enjoyed a free Constitution, we have it as free and as much calculated for happiness, for security, and for every blessing of society as any nation upon earth, equally of as England.—With this, with every power of trade, with every port in the universe that is open to England, open likewise to us, we have nothing to gain and we have much to lose,—we have to lose, that Constitution under which we have thriven since its Final Adjustment in 1782, and which has raised us into manufactures, trade, affluence, and station among the nations of the earth.

In

In preserving this Constitution we retain all the means of trade, through all the various channels of wealth, as open now to us as to Britain, whereas if we sacrifice it to the nonsensical project in question, wealth will vanish when freedom is banished, and we have more to lose than mere wealth or trade; we have that to lose for which Englishmen in every age have fought and bled; for which our ancestors gloriously persevered in battle; and for the preservation of which the British Empire is now engaged in the most arduous war,—Liberty, not as inculcated by modern political traitors, but sound genuine constitutional Liberty.

I have now proved the different situation of the two kingdoms, and that there is no similarity between that of Ireland in 1799 and that of Scotland in 1706, and I might dismiss the subject, but I will for a moment admit the comparison, to shew you that every argument drawn from it, strongly urges us against a similar experiment. The argument is shallow, which attributes every increase of trade, of population, of wealth in Scotland from that day to this, to the Union, as if nothing was due to the progressive state of the world during a century, and Scotland alone amidst surrounding nations was to have remained stationary; if such was the viciousness of her Constitution, the miseries of her situation or the depression of her resources; well might she have accepted any terms.

But has Scotland advanced in prosperity since the Union as much as Ireland? Mr. Dundas her great advocate, states the progress of her linen manufacture, to shew her increase of prosperity, it was one million of yards in 1706, and in 1796, 23 millions. How does the linen manufacture of Ireland stand the comparison?

Its

	<i>Yards.</i>	<i>Value.</i>
Its export was in 1706	530,838	22,750
1783	16,039,705	1,069,313
1796	46,705,319	3,113,687

that is 88 times greater, as to quantity, and 137 times greater as to value in 1796 than in 1700, and thus that manufacture which is the staple of both kingdoms, and which Mr. Dundas very properly brought forward to rest his arguments on, rose from 1 to 88 in Ireland, in separate and ununited, Ireland, under the nurture and protection of Ireland's Parliament, while during the same period it rose in united Scotland without a resident Parliament from 1 to 23 only. Has Mr. Dundas any more such arguments to produce?

He and Mr. Pitt seem conscious they have little to urge by holding Scotland to us as an example, for they both state one solitary instance of Glasgow's rise, and yet as I am informed, that very town has decreased in its trade ever since the American war.

But why don't they rely on the increased population of Scotland as well as on its trade, it was 1 million, at the Union, and Mr. Pitt says it is a million and a half now, but Ireland had little above $1\frac{1}{2}$ million of inhabitants at the same time, and has near $4\frac{1}{2}$ now. If population be a desirable object, if it be riches to a state, and the means of increasing the empire's strength, Ireland has increased three fold without a Union, and Scotland only one half with it.

Why don't he refer to their agriculture, which is peculiarly applicable to the question, because its rise began in Ireland with the Constitution of 1782, which the Minister now wants to annihilate? it has risen since that period to the value of full a million yearly, including the decrease or rather stop-

page of import, the immense accession of home demand, and the encreasing export; even so much as to supply largely every year, this affluent kingdom whose prosperity we are desired to imitate, and who cannot maintain itself.

And why does not Mr. Dundas who compliments me by saying I descended to create an alarm on the staple manufacture of Ireland, which is the great manufacture of the country I represent,—why does not he descend to tell us the opinion of his country-man, Mr. Adam Smith on the beneficial operations of the Scotch Union.—Did it promote trade or manufacture in Smith's opinion? No. His words are in 1775, 'of all commercial advantages which Scotland has derived from the Union, the rise in the price of cattle is perhaps the greatest.' The live cattle on which we have laid duties to check their export. And again, 'the price of wool was reduced by the Union, excluding it from the great markets of Europe, and confining it to the narrow one of England.'

If Ireland then stands the comparison with united Scotland, let us try how she stands even with united Britain.

		<i>Value.</i>
The exports of Ireland were in	1706	548,318
	1783	2,935,067
	1796	5,064,834
The exports from Britain in	1706	6,512,086
	1708	6,969,089
	1796	27,621,843

In Ireland the exports rose nearly from one to ten, and in Britain from the year after the Union, (which I have chosen for fair comparison, as it includes the Scotch trade,) from 1 to 3 and a fraction,—the Irish is almost ten times as great as it was in 1706, the British not 4 times.

I take

I take the year 1796, because Mr. Dundas selected it, and you will observe in the Irish statements that the exports of 1783 are marked, that you may compare them with 1796 and see the great spring which the free Constitution has give to trade and manufacture. The general export rose in 78 years to 1782 from 1 to 5, and in 14 years after 1782 from 5 to 10. The linen export in the 78 years rose from 1 to 32, and in the last 14, from 32 to 88: so that the general export rose as much in the last 14 years, as it had done, not only during the preceding 78 years, but during all time preceding; and the linen encreased in the last 14 years very nearly to treble the amount of what it had been before.

And will you part with the Constitution of 1782? No!—If the whole of this comparison says any thing, it cries out in emphatic terms to all Ireland, to every honest Irishman—**NO UNION!!!**—Reject the offer, and adhere to the Constitution of 1782; the immense value of which, every argument advanced for the Union, every enquiry into the state of things since, points out to you in every circumstance.

To conclude this part of the subject. The question between England and Scotland was, Union or total Separation, immediately on the demise of the Crown. The question between us, is, the Minister's project, or the Constitution of 1782; the Union we possess, which guards us against Separation, and works well in practice, or a new one, at the expence of our liberty, our tranquillity, and our happiness, which, in its very terms, leads to Separation. Seton, whom Mr. Dundas quotes at length, recommended the Union of Scotland to prevent Separation:—we oppose the proposed Union from the same motive.

P

I now

I now proceed to a subject which I wish had never been mentioned—the competence of Parliament; it is dangerous in a popular assembly to state, that there are points where the powers of the legislature end and those of the people at large begin; such points are incapable of definition, and the assertion is capable of very dangerous misinterpretation.—I am happy therefore it is no way necessary to go into it, let me only remark this: whatever may or may not be its competence, the doctrine of the omnipotence of Parliament which some Gentlemen have advanced, certainly goes too far, and much farther than they are aware of, for it argues against the permanency of the very Union it is advanced to promote. Is it not evident, that the united Parliament must be as omnipotent as the separate Parliaments, and may therefore break any article of the Union at its pleasure; and if this omnipotence can consolidate two separate Legislatures, it may equally consolidate the two separate Houses, or the three estates of each, and then take from the Commons the Constitutional power over the purse of the nation, and give it to the King, as was the case virtually in Scotland, prior to the Union.

It may, with the same power that it removes the Irish Parliament out of the realm of Ireland, remove the British Parliament out of the realm of Britain, to Jersey, Guernsey, the West Indies, or the Isle of Man: in the same course of reasoning, it may put down any branch of the Constitution, and justify the usurpation of Cromwell. An argument which proves too much, proves nothing. I wish it never had been mentioned, it makes an unnecessary waste of time; for if I have shewn you, that our station in the British Empire rests on a firm basis, that our connexion with Great Britain is solid to every practical purpose, that it does not hang by a thread, but is riveted on the interests, the sentiments, and affec-
tions

tions of both nations ; and that those rivets are closed and kept firm by the regulations of 1782. That the Union thus consolidated, is the most strong and effectual, which human wisdom could form between two kingdoms, situated as Great Britain and Ireland are : that every imperial concern has ever since been arranged as soon as known : that the Constitution then established has not only worked well, (to use a modern phrase) to promote the strength and energy of the Empire, but to raise this kingdom into prosperity, and keep it in a steady and rapid advance even beyond the utmost hopes of its warmest advocates ; if, not only no necessity for the innovation has been proved, but the only real and avowed argument turns out to be, a desire to take from you the power of taxation, and vest it in Britain. If no trade, no manufactures, no capital, has been or can be given to you by the measure ; but on the contrary, all you enjoy will be rendered insecure : if it encreasess your absentees, draws away the property, the talents, and the industry of the country ; if it damps all enterprize, and degrades a great and rising kingdom into an abject and depressed colony ; if no means of tranquility or security against the enemy is to be its result, but discontent and danger is to arise from it : if it tends to disunite the affections, and to create jealousy between the two great members of the Empire, who are now firmly, happily, and cordially united : if the example of Scotland, which is held out to you as a temptation, affords no one inducement, but as far as any argument can be drawn from it, warns you loudly against the measure, in short, if your own Parliament is competent, and more effectual than any other, to every work of Legislation or Parliamentary exertion, for all the particular concerns of Ireland, and for every Imperial purpose, it is needless to enquire into its power, or its competence, as to an object, in which it can have no one inducement to exercise power

power, and every possible motive to decline it; it is wiser to look to its competence to do good, to protect and support the country. Store up in your minds then, the words of Lord Camden last May 'that the wisdom, the firmness and 'spirit manifested by the House of Commons during the 'whole of that eventful period, and their peculiar promptitude, alacrity, and unanimity, must tend in the most 'effectual manner to crush rebellion and save the state,' and again, 'the promptitude and spirit of the House of Commons must ever be remembered with gratitude by the 'country and myself, they have enabled me to develope 'and expose the deepest conspiracy that ever existed, and 'to place the kingdom in a state to meet the efforts of a 'foreign as well as a domestic enemy.' Remember the thanks of his Majesty to you by your present viceroy in October last, 'for the unshaken firmness and magnanimity, with which you met the many trying difficulties; 'and with which the treason were planned, which you 'adopted for the preservation of your country.' Be it your pride to be competent to such glorious exertions.

It is needless to enter into the details of a measure, the principle of which, I trust, will never be entertained: one thing only I will remark, that if the purity of Parliament depends on the purity of election—if that purity rests on Mr. Grenville's law for controverted election, which no man can deny, his law must be inoperative to Ireland in a united Parliament, and of course you cannot preserve the purity of election or of Parliament, so far as that law is concerned. You all know the number of witnesses to be examined on an election trial; the many whose evidence occur during the very trial to be necessary, and the great delay and heavy expence attending the whole. How then could you have such a trial in London? The expence

pence alone would be so formidable, that few, very few would be capable, and fewer willing to undertake a petition: the Sheriff would virtually enjoy the power of nomination, and if ever Government, in its zeal for the public service, should happen to think it right to appoint Sheriffs with a view to elections (I do not say they ever do) the nomination of the Members would finally rest with that government.

I have gone through every argument, or assertion, that any of the British or Irish advocates for this fatal measure have advanced, except one, which regards the state of Religion in this kingdom, it is too delicate a subject to discuss unnecessarily, and I cannot but condemn the imprudence which has brought it forward now, as if the object were by rousing animosities, and setting the nation by the ears, to make any change even that of surrendering its liberty and independence, worth consideration, if not worth trial. I will only observe on it, that Mr. Pitt's language is of such a nature, that one would imagine he had the two religions on either side of him, and one was not to hear what he said to the other. He tells the Catholic in his speech, that it is not easy to say, what should be the church establishment in this kingdom, and his 5th resolution states that the present church establishment is to be preserved. He tells them, that the time for discussing their situation must depend on two points, 'when their conduct shall make it safe, and when the temper of the times shall be favourable,' and Mr. Dundas adds, 'if ever such a time shall come.' Let me ask you, in common sense, is an Irish Parliament incompetent to decide these points, to deliberate, to judge on matters which pass in Ireland; and is a foreign and uninformed assembly adequate to it? It is a weak and silly imposition.

Were

Were I to address the Catholics, the Protestants, and all religions, I would say, your Country is in danger, a desperate attempt is on foot to seduce you to surrender the independence of your Parliament. You are all natives of the same island, interested in its trade, its prosperity, its freedom, and in all the blessings of a glorious and happy constitution—bound by every tie of duty to yourselves, your country, and your posterity, to preserve it, join all hands and hearts together, bring the vessel into port, forget all family differences, all local or partial jealousies, and save Ireland, save your country. Tell the bold minister who wants to take away your Constitution, that he shall not have it, that you will not be his dupes; that you love Britain as a brother, but you will be his brother not his dependant, that you will not degrade yourselves from an independant kingdom into an abject colony.

To any of you who have doubts on the measure, I would say, these very doubts call on you to vote against it—don't hazard a change where you have a doubt, a change from whence there is no return—accept it, you have it for better for worse, you never can untie the knot—no appeal, no Parliament left, to hear, to argue, or to speak for you; and if the step you take should prove wrong, if it should unfortunately end in the nation's calling for her old Constitution again, and the politics of a British Cabinet should be so desperate as not to listen to that call, think of the dreadful consequences you may be the cause of, if fatally the shock of arms should follow. Even to you whose conviction is clear, I would say, if the majority of your countrymen think differently from you, if even a respectable part of them only think so, don't rest so confidently on your own judgments, as to risk a measure which you cannot undo; remember then if the direful necessity should ever arrive to make it expedient—you may embrace it

it when you please, but if once adopted, it is irrevocable.—Were I speaking in another assembly, and if in such assembly any member sat returned for a borough, where the wishes of the electors followed the voice of some one individual by which he became to have an habitual superiority, and of course a strong interest in its preservation, (I don't say such a case exists here, though it might not be unparliamentary to suppose it.) I would tell him, he is a trustee, and without positive and direct desire, he should not do an act which is to annihilate the interest he is entrusted with.—No, no—let all join in cherishing the Parliament—it is a good one, and has done its duty—it has proved itself competent to every purpose of legislation, to secure peace, to put down rebellion, and had its vigour been followed up since last June, peace would have been since secured, and rebellion extinguished.—Refuse the measure, but refuse it with calmness and dignity.—Let not the offer of it lessen your attachment or weaken your affections to Britain, and prove that you are, and wish to be, as the Duke of Portland told you you were, *indissolubly connected with Great Britain, one in unity of constitution and unity of interest*.—But above all, revere and steadily preserve that Constitution which was confirmed to you under his administration in 1782, and which has given you Wealth, Trade, Prosperity, Freedom and Independence.

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R E V I E W

OF A PUBLICATION,

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T H E S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

J O H N F O S T E R,

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS OF IRELAND;

I N A L E T T E R,

ADDRESSED TO HIM

BY WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.

THE SECOND EDITION.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY MARCHBANK,

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1799.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE following Letter stands in need of indulgence ; and is perhaps, in some degree entitled to it. It was begun on Tuesday last, (the publication which it purports to answer, having appeared only the day before) and has been written so expeditiously, that the whole of the work (or indeed one-fourth of it) has never been at once under the Writer's eye,—nor had he even time for reading over his own manuscript ; but was obliged to confine his corrections to those which he could make in revising proofs.

The consequence, perhaps, may be many faults of style, and some repetitions ; owing to the Writer's not having been able to ascertain, with sufficient exactness, what he had already treated,—from his sending the sheets to press nearly as fast as they were written.

He does not, however, expect that this hurry should excuse him for faults, of argument or statement into which he may have fallen. He should not have ventured to submit his thoughts so hastily to the Publick, but that he had already reflected sufficiently upon his subject, to make him hope that expedition could do little more than affect the style ; a consideration which he conceived to be so subordinate, as that it might be well to sacrifice it to the desire of an early publication.

But it may be asked, Why the Writer has chosen this mode of replying to a Speech, which, as a Member of Parliament, he had the privilege of answering in his place?—

The

The fact is, that nothing could be more just or reasonable, than the claim of the distinguished Personage, to whom this Letter is addressed, to be heard upon the great question of a Legislative Union, upon the first opportunity that presented itself for delivering his sentiments;—but for the Writer of this Letter who had already, on a former occasion, obtained a long and patient hearing, to have again addressed the House on the Subject of Union, when that question was not before them, would have been highly unreasonable, and presumptuous.

It only remains to observe, that the following Letter is not intended as an original argument; or full investigation of the Question of Union. It is an answer to the Speech published as the Speaker's: in an Address to the People of Ireland, the Writer has gone into a more direct discussion of the question itself; and thought it would be wrong here to repeat arguments, which he had already offered to the Publick.



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SIR,

THE Speech lately published as yours,* I had the good fortune of hearing you deliver; and in common, I apprehend, with the rest of your auditors, regarded it as a splendid and convincing proof that your reputation for Commercial Knowledge is as merited, as it is high. Indeed, if the ability of a Speech were to be estimated by the rich abundance of information which it contained, the excellence of yours would not admit of controversy; neither can I altogether withhold from it the praise to which a judicious selection of topics is entitled; and still less am I disposed to contest its claim to approbation on the ground of acuteness, perspicuity and logical precision; qualities, in which if it be in any degree deficient, the defect is not attributable to you, but to the weakness of the opinion which it was your task to support.

But if, towards estimating the value of an argument, we must advert to the conclusion which it is intended to inculcate, and can pronounce it able, only in proportion as it is convincing, I shall be obliged to withhold the praise of ability from yours; for though I listened to it with unintermitted, and unprejudiced attention, and with a mind sufficiently full of the subject which it treated, to render me the more capable of

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weighing

* By Moore, in College-Green.

weighing the reasons which it contained, yet I protest it totally failed of carrying conviction to my mind.

To this failure, Sir, you are to impute the trouble of my present Letter ; in which, without deviating from that respect which is due to you, I shall endeavour to answer the arguments which you have urged. I am apprized of the vast interval which there is between us, in point of talents and information ; but, great as it may be, I conceive it, on the present question, to be filled up by the superior force, and number of those arguments, which offer themselves in favour of the opinion that I have embraced ; and I feel a confidence, not so much in myself, as in my position.

I shall, in the following pages, aim at no stricter order than that which will arise from my attending you regularly through your topicks ; and, agreeably to this loose arrangement, shall begin by noticing your first :

You set out by asserting that the adjustment of 1782 was a final one ; a position which I conceive to be as true, as it is irrelevant ; and which therefore I am not disposed to controvert, but only to explain.

Indeed, it is strangely usual to omit adjusting the meaning of propositions, before we give them our assent. I believe it is Locke who has laid it down, that an accurate definition may preclude a world of argument ; and, conformably to his opinion, I am inclined to expect, that, after having examined the meaning of the position which I have just noticed, we shall deem an attempt to draw from it any thing illustrative of the Question of Union, about as hopeful as the Lagado scheme of extracting sunbeams from cucumbers.

The measures of 1782 must have had reference to that, out of which they arose ; and the adjustment been of something, which had been in controversy : for I cannot conceive a settlement,

ment, without some subject matter for it to operate upon ; nor extend its operation beyond the limits of those doubts, or controversies, to which it was meant to put an end.

Now, what was the subject matter of the settlement of 1782? The claim of the British Parliament to enact laws, that should bind Ireland ; and the denial, on the part of Ireland, of the justice of this claim.

The right of legislating for Ireland had not only been, for centuries, practically asserted by the Parliament of England, but had been expressly recognised, and insisted on, by legal and constitutional writers ; and been by them referred to the principle of Irish dependence, and subordination ; a principle, still more mortifying to the spirit of this country, than even the deduction, of a right to legislative control, which it supported.

The pride of Irishmen was naturally offended, at finding it laid down by a commentator on the Laws of England,* that where this country was particularly named, or included within general words, there could be no doubt but she was bound by all Acts of the British Legislature ; nor was the jealousy, which this doctrine was calculated to inspire, appeased by the information, which the same writer gave them, that "it followed from the very nature and constitution of a dependent state:" still less, were they likely to be soothed by a review of the servile, and invidious provisions, by which the statutes of Sir Edward Poynings had degraded our Parliament, in order to rivet our dependence ;—or of the want of that security to the liberties of the subject, which the inhabitants of England derived from the frame, and limited duration of their Mutiny Bill.

The assertion of such claims on the part of Britain, and denial of their justice by the Parliament of this country,—the degrading

* Blackstone.

grading system by which, on the one hand, these claims were supported, and the impatience with which both claims and system were brooked upon the other,—inevitably produced a controversy the most momentous in its aspect, and to which the settlement of 1782 very fortunately put an end. I accede to your enumeration of those grievances,* of which, at that period, the removal was desired: you truly state them to have consisted of Great Britain's claim to bind this country: the appellant jurisdiction:† the provisions of Poynings' law; and the frame and perpetuity of the Mutiny Bill. The first of these grievances, (viz. the claim of Britain) was the grand point in issue, and to which the others were either appurtenant or allied; and as for the third and fourth, they formed no subject of controversy between the two nations; but furnished mere matter for internal regulation. In 1782 these grievances were removed; and I cannot but exult at our having then been freed from a system of control, too degrading and oppressive to this country, to be justified by that consolidation of the empire, at which it aimed; and which, if not yet so firmly secured as every true friend to British connexion must desire, is yet attainable, by measures which the Irish Parliament is competent to adopt, and which I too much respect the arrangement of 1782, to charge it with having placed beyond their reach.

I agree with you, Sir, that the adjustment of 1782 and 1783, was final; and that the Acts of the 22d and 23d of the King, by repealing the 6th of Geo. I., and declaring that the people of Ireland should be bound only by laws enacted by the Parliament of this kingdom,—formed a compact between the countries, which, without a gross breach of faith, Great Britain cannot violate; and of which Irishmen ought not to yield the benefit, but with their lives.

Therefore, if you shew me any breach of this solemn and final settlement,—any attempt on the part of England to legislate

* Page 9.

† Which second was a merely theoretick grievance.

late for this country, or invade the supremacy of our courts of justice, or our Parliament,—I shall join with you in protesting against the injustice of such conduct; but until this be shewn, you must allow me to doubt the pertinence of those reiterations, that the adjustment of 1782 was final, which principally occupy more than forty pages of your Speech:—You are continually pointing to your premisses, when I am looking for your conclusion; and wasting your time in laying foundations which will support no fabrick material to the present question,

Can you, Mr. Speaker, a man of undoubted and distinguished talents, mean seriously to contend, that the British Parliament in 1782, by disclaiming the right of binding this country by its statutes, precluded the Irish Parliament from deliberating on the expediency of a Legislative Union, and adopting or rejecting it, according to the result of such deliberation?—I am averse from imputing to you an argument, which strikes my understanding to be so unsuitably feeble;—yet find it difficult (excuse my freedom) to acquit you of having been rather profuse of irrelevant assertion, unless by attributing to you the design of perverting those assertions, and founding arguments upon them which a judgment, incomparably beneath yours, should perceive they never can sustain. I am driven to suspect, that in asserting the adjustment of 1782 to have been final, you insinuate it to have been preclusive; and that in settling the controversies from whence it flowed, (and which alone it could affect) it incapacitated one of two independent countries from submitting a system to the consideration of another; and disqualified this latter from investigating the merits of the plan thus offered, and adopting it, if it seemed calculated for the benefit of both.

To me it appears too clear for argument, that the adjustment which finally disclaimed the right of Great Britain to
legislate

legislate for Ireland, and thus put an end to all controversies which had been generated by such a claim, did not affect the right of the Irish Legislature, in its wisdom, thereafter, to adopt such arrangements as circumstances might require, and as should seem conducive to the welfare of this kingdom, and the empire.

To me it appears like something worse than extraordinary doctrine, that the adjustment which recognised the legislative supremacy of the Irish Parliament, at the same time precluded it from exercising its supreme authority, by the adoption of a measure, which it deemed pregnant with advantages to that country, over whose interests it presided.

When the British Parliament renounced its claim of dictating to this country, did it part with the harmless right of recommending a measure to our consideration? Did his Majesty, in assenting to any of the measures of 1782, deprive himself of the innoxious privilege of suggesting to a future Irish Parliament, which he should assemble to consult *de arduis Regni*, the consideration of a measure which, to his royal wisdom, seemed calculated to meet the arduous situation of the empire?—Did the Irish Parliament, by the share which it took in the transactions of 1782, despoil itself of its deliberative capacities, and preclude itself from considering, adopting, or rejecting, the measure thus suggested from the throne? If so, the British Parliament, at that period, did more than wave its pretensions to superiority over this country: it surrendered a portion of its inherent powers: it cramped and circumscribed its own internal authority; and imposed restraints upon itself, which render it, with respect to Ireland, less free than it is in its intercourse with any other nation in Europe, or the world.

The King too, according to this interpretation of the settlement of 1782, must be construed to have parted (rather inconsistently

consistently with the duties of his high station) with an essential attribute and prerogative of that royal dignity, which is, as it were, the centre round which revolve the liberties of our Constitution; and the Irish Parliament must be assumed to have abdicated its situation, and renounced its right of consulting and advancing the interests of the nation.—I hesitate to admit a construction, from which such consequences flow.

The settlement of 1782 did what? It adjusted the controversies which had arisen from the claims of Britain to a right of legislating for this country: a right, which I have your authority (p. 5) for saying, this country had not acknowledged, but had denied.—The arrangement of 1782 then, was merely the abolition of an abuse, and a restitution of the genuine principles of our establishment. Suppose this abuse had never arisen: that Irish Independence had never been invaded; nor the exclusive Legislative Competence of our Parliament disputed, either in theory or practice; and let me ask of any reasonable man, Whether it would be an infringement of this Independence, for Britain to propose (subjecting the offer to our rejection) a Legislative Union of these two Independent Kingdoms?—If not, can such a proposal be said to violate a compact, which has done no more (you tell us) than to secure and reinstate us in that independence, of which the same proposal would have been no infringement?

Has the compact of 1782 rendered Ireland more independent of Great Britain, than this latter country has at all times been of Ireland? and would it be any invasion of British Independence, if we should propose an Union to the Parliament of Great Britain? No reasonable man can say it would; because to submit to the Legislature of a country, an offer which that Legislature may, at its discretion, accept of or reject, can never be construed into the slightest encroachment on the independence of those to whom it is made. Nay, such an offer is not only compatible with their independence, but even with subordination

ordination on the part of those from whom it comes; and accordingly, in the reign of Anne, before the æra of Irish Independence, we find the proposal of Union coming from the Irish Lords.

Now, can it be said that a proposal, coming from the British to the Irish Parliament, is a violation of the independence of this country, or of the compact by which that independence has been recognised,—when the same proposal, moving from Ireland to Great Britain, could never, by any casuistry, be tortured into the slightest encroachment on the, at least, equally undisputed independence of that country?

France or Spain are surely as independent of Great Britain, as this island can pretend to be; yet I will be bold to say, that in proposing a Legislative Union with either of those States, though England might be guilty of gross extravagance and absurdity, she could not be taxed with impeaching their independence: Why then should she be accused of infringing ours, or of violating that compact by which it has been secured, on the ground of having offered that, which she might offer to any State in Europe, without incurring the charge of having encroached upon its privileges?

But I am, for argument, supposing a case which does not exist: the English Parliament has made us no proposal.—The alledged violation of the compact of 1782, has consisted in nothing more than this,—that the King of Ireland has presumed to recommend it to his Irish Parliament to consider, and adopt, the best mode of consolidating into a lasting fabrick, the component parts of the British Empire! In like manner, the King of England has ventured to recommend to his British Parliament, to enter upon a similar deliberation; and I have not heard that that high-spirited nation has interpreted this conduct of its Monarch into an infringement of that independence, which it possesses as undoubtedly and securely, as Ireland can hers, by virtue of the compact of 1782.

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The proposal of an Union has been introduced in the most legitimate, and unobjectionable shape possible: it has been offered to the consideration of the British and Irish Legislature, by the common Monarch of both kingdoms.

In the year 1780 we acquired a Free Trade; and in 1782 we acquired a Free Constitution. Our acquisition in 1780 was not held to preclude a *Commercial* Regulation in 1785; * and why should our acquisitions of 1782 be held to prevent a *Constitutional* Regulation in 1799? It was indeed indispensable that the arrangements of 1785 should be compatible with the freedom of trade which had been conceded five years before; and in like manner it is indispensably requisite, (towards their validity,) that any Constitutional Arrangements, hereafter made, should be consistent with the Rights which this Country acquired in 1782; and should not violate the Independence which we then asserted.

If the British Parliament had attempted, by a Statute passed in England, to bind this Country to an Union, this indeed would have been to violate the compact of 1782: but what, on the contrary, has been done?—the Recommendation from the Throne involved a manifest admission of Exclusive Competence in the Parliament of this Country to decide upon the question; and the British Minister, in that Speech to which you so frequently advert, has expressly acknowledged the Right of the Irish Parliament to reject the measure of a Legislative Union. Thus the proposal, so far from violating the agreement of 1782, has afforded a signal instance of adherence to that compact, and solemn recognition of the Independence which it secured.

Let me now anticipate, in some degree, upon a topic which belongs to another part of my argument, by supposing, that instead of having been merely proposed, the measure of

* For no opposition to the arrangement was on this ground ever made or thought of.

an Union had been adopted ; and by enquiring, Whether such adoption would be a violation of the compact of 1782 ?

A moment's reflexion will convince my reader—that much of the reasoning, which, for another purpose, I have had recourse to, will prove that this measure would involve no such violation.

For instance : Is England less dependent upon Ireland, than this latter country is on her ? clearly not. Yet a Legislative Union would not encroach on the Independence of Great Britain : then neither can it, include a breach of that compact of 1782, which its most zealous advocate cannot pretend to have done more, than render Ireland as independent of Britain, as Britain is of her.

But Union will diminish the number of Irish representatives. Suppose I should consent to desert the abstract question, and enter upon that which, regarding the terms, is not before me, still I may with truth reply to this objection,—that a representation proportioned to Irish territory, population, resources, and contribution, in an Union thoroughly identifying the interests of the two countries, will be sufficient to secure to Ireland, as complete a participation in the privileges of the British constitution, (and what more could her warmest friend desire ?) as is enjoyed by the inhabitants of any English county ; whose numbers would yet (if any one were silly enough to compare them) be found to bear no proportion to the sum of British representation.

Again : Ireland is not, by virtue of the compact of 1782, less dependant on Great Britain, than Scotland was on England before 1706. If an Union then would infringe that independence which our compact has procured, it follows, that the Scottish Union involved a violation of the independence of Scotland. But no loyal subject, or friend to order—will flippantly impeach the justice or validity of a treaty, on which perhaps depend

depend the legitimacy of the United Parliament,—the authority of its statutes, and even the title of his Majesty to his Scottish Crown.*

By the Union, the number of Scotch representatives was abridged; and I shall no otherwise answer the epithets which you lavish on an analogous system, when you describe Irish Union as “a destructive and accursed measure,” “a surrender and annihilation of our Constitution,”—than by suggesting to you the subversive consequences, which lurk behind a doctrine,—that may taint the Acts of the British Legislature for near a century; absolve Scotland from its allegiance, and impeach the title of the reigning family to the throne of that realm; or which at best will leave this great Imperial Arrangement, to depend for its stability on the frail basis of acquiescence, and of an insufficient and short-lived prescription, which we can trace to have commenced in an unjust encroachment on the rights and privileges of an Independent Nation.

The measure of Union can no otherwise violate that compact, on which you so much rely, than by trenching on the Independence which it guaranteed; and if such would be its operation in the case of Ireland, such must it have been in the case of equally independent Scotland. As invectives are not arguments, (else a speech would be logical, in proportion as it was abusive,) I am sure you have too much sense and candour, to expect that I should give a farther answer to those epithets, which you have lavished on the measure of a Legislative Union. You do not need to be informed, that if Union were indeed the annihilation of our Constitution, the many virtuous and enlightened men who are friendly to it, would become zealous converts to your opinion: but those persons hold Union to include no such surrender; and if their judgment be erroneous, yet they are to be refuted by argument, and not frightened out of their sentiments by mere vehement assertion. Let me close

* Secured to the House of Hanover by an article of the Union.

close this part of my argument, by selecting a few passages from the numerous extracts, which you have incorporated into your Speech; and by subjoining a remark on the conclusiveness of such documents.

The first passage which I shall transcribe, is extracted by you (p. 7.) from an address to his Majesty, voted by the House of Commons, on the 16th of April 1782, and is as follows: “The Crown of Ireland is inseparably annexed to the Crown of Great Britain; on which connexion, the interests and happiness of both nations depend; *but the kingdom of Ireland is a distinct kingdom, with a Parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof.*”

Upon this latter sentence, you seem to me to place some reliance; but as it strikes me, without the least foundation. It is manifest, to any person who reads the passage, and has even a general notion of the transactions of that period, that those who penned the Address had no intention of insisting on the distinctness of this kingdom, or contrasting it with the situation which Union would produce; but merely meant to urge this distinctness, as an argument against the abuse, of which they complained; and to insinuate the injustice of their being bound by the acts of a Parliament, *in which they were not represented*: and that this is the true interpretation of the passage is so clear, from even what I have already quoted, that it is almost superfluous to support it by transcribing the next sentence, which, however, is as follows: “there is no body of men competent to make laws, to bind this nation, except the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland; nor any other Parliament, which hath any authority in this country, save only the Parliament of Ireland.”

The next passages which I shall transcribe, are extracted from an Address of the House of Commons to the Duke of Portland, and of the Speech with which his Grace concluded the Session, and occur in pages 14 and 15 of your Speech.

“We”

“ We” (say the House of Commons,) “ shall have seen
 “ this great national arrangement established on a basis which
 “ secures the tranquillity of Ireland, and unites the affections
 “ as well as interests of both kingdoms.”

“ Convince the people” (says the Lord Lieutenant) “ in
 “ your several districts, that the two kingdoms are now one;
 “ indissolubly connected in unity of Constitution, and unity of
 “ Interests.”

Upon these passages I would remark, that the language which they hold was encouraging and useful; calculated to promote harmony between the two countries, and produce that lasting cordiality which it proclaimed. But with all due respect for the Speech of a Viceroy, (which yet the Constitution recognises as the Speech of the Minister,) and all proper deference for the Address of a House of Commons, I would observe, that both the Viceroy and the Commons, when they travel out of facts, and expatiate in conjectures, risk falling into those errors from which no human creature is exempt. There is but one Potentate, that I know of, who claims to be infallible, and his claim, the tenets of my Religion do not oblige me to admit. But, if I be not bound to acquiesce implicitly in all the obiter opinions, which are promulged by a Viceroy, or a House of Commons,—still less am I obliged to swallow their predictions. When they turn Prophets, I feel myself warranted to doubt their inspiration; though, in the present instance, I chuse to shift from myself, on the Societies of United Irishmen, and hordes of Irish traitors, the disrespectful task of comparing certain events and doctrines which we have lately witnessed, with those predictions which foretold the permanent tranquillity of Ireland, the mutual affection of the Sister Countries, and their indissoluble connexion,—as the inevitable consequences of the arrangement of 1782.

The next (and last) reference, which I shall rather digress from the train of my argument to notice, is that which you make to the modification of Poyning's law, and which will be found

found in p. 24 of your Speech. That statute, you say, "enacts
 " that no bill shall pass into a law in Ireland, unless it be re-
 " turned under the Great Seal of Great Britain."

This provision you state, with a triumph which I cannot understand. To me it seems to involve a signal acknowledgment of the frailty of that bond by which these countries are connected; and to apply a weak and inadequate remedy to the evil which it admits. What is the cure which it administers? Forsooth the responsibility of an individual to the Parliament of Great Britain. This wonderful *Nostrum* is to remove all the separating tendencies, and acrimonies, and eruptions, which may arise from the nature of our present connexion, and announce the cachexy of our Imperial Constitution.—No: I advert to the defect which this provision announces, and place little reliance on the cure which it provides. I consider the law as an argument for a Legislative Union, inasmuch as I do not estimate the vigour of a man, by the number of his crutches, or the stability of a house by the number of its props.

Having now finished my examination of those documents to which you refer, I return from that short digression which, in noticing the last of them, I have made; and close the answer which I have endeavoured to give to this part of your Argument, by admitting, in the very language which you have chosen to adopt, "that the adjustment of 1782 was final: that
 " by it the Constitution of Ireland was fully and perfectly esta-
 " blished; and that no Constitutional Question can exist, to
 " interrupt the harmony of the two countries."*

But, as the adoption of Union by an Irish Parliament, independent, and uncontrolled, would not unsettle that final adjustment, which did no more than assert the Independence of that Parliament,—as the mode in which the measure of Union has been introduced, so far from assailing that "full and perfect establishment" of our independence, which was secured
 to

to us in 1782, has, on the contrary, at the risk of losing this great measure, most solemnly and explicitly recognised that independence,—as Union is no “Constitutional Question,” but an Imperial Arrangement *submitted* to the wisdom of our Parliament, and which that Parliament is competent to reject,—and above all, as I acquiesce in the proposition contained in his Majesty’s Answer to an Address in 1782, that “the constitutional connexion between Great Britain and Ireland, is essential to the interests and happiness of both nations,”—I am, for these reasons, unable to discover how that position on which you so rely,—that the adjustment of 1782 was final—is at all material to the present question; and I am ready to adopt a measure, which, without repealing that recognition of the Independence of Ireland, seems calculated to give stability to its connexion with Great Britain.

In denying the settlement of 1782 to have been final, it seems that Mr. Pitt meant to assert no more than I do.—He could not mean to deny, that that arrangement put a final period to all British claims of legislating for this country, and all doubts respecting Irish Independence. That he did not intend to dispute this, he has very unequivocally proved, by an explicit admission of the Independence of our Parliament, and its competence to reject the measure which was submitted to its consideration.—He seems merely to have deprecated a perversion of this truth, to the purposes of falsehood; and, while he admitted that the compact of 1782 was a final settlement of all controversies, to have denied *that it was a final abolition of the inherent powers of Parliament*: that it extinguished or abridged the deliberative or (internally) legislative capacities of either legislature; or debarred the Irish Parliament from the unalienable right of employing the supreme authority of the State, towards attaining the permanent welfare of the Empire.—This, I apprehend, was all that he denied; and heartily do I concur in the denial: deliberately do I record my dissent from those
who

who pronounce that, in accomplishing an Union, the British or Irish Parliament would violate the final settlement of 1782.

I might not state accurately (as I have not the printed copy before me,) and therefore I do not attempt to state at all, the Speech of the British Minister: I merely suggest, that he appears to have made no assertion, *substantially* different from mine, upon this question. The immense superiority of his talents and political knowledge over mine, may have prevented him from treating the subject as I have done. He, for instance, may have dwelt on the presumption which arises, from what passed in the British Parliament on the 17th of May, 1782, that some further measures of constitution were then in the contemplation of the British Legislature.*

“The fact” (you tell us) “*seems to be*, that the resolution in “respect to future measures had commerce, only, in view.”†

In the above passage you appear to admit some further arrangements to have been in contemplation; which, whether they were commercial, you can but conjecture, and we may be allowed to doubt.—But suppose they were.—Still the fact supplies this inference, that the compact of 1782 did not preclude the Parliaments of these countries from keeping up a friendly and federative intercourse, and entering into such new compacts as circumstances might require. And why not into political, as well as commercial compacts? The Agreement of 1782 had decided a point in issue: it had put an end to controversy, not to intercourse, between the countries; and they still, compatibly with the spirit of that contract, were at liberty to enter on any new treaty, political or commercial; provided, in concluding or abandoning it, the Irish Parliament was allowed to exercise as uncontrolled a discretion as the British; and, in short, provided the basis of the transaction was an acknowledgment of that independence which we established in 1782. But the Address of the Irish Commons to his Majesty, at that period, having (with truth) denied that “any other
“Parliament

* P. 19.

† P. 21.

“Parliament hath authority in this country, save only the
 “Parliament of Ireland,” § therefore a Legislative Union would
 disturb the settlement of 1782!—I deny the conclusion. It is
 only one of the numerous forms, in which the unproved and
 untenable assertion appears, that, after Union, the Supreme
 Authority would not continue vested in the Parliament of
 Ireland;—and can have no influence on any minds, but those
 which confound Distinctness with Independence, and Union
 with Subordination. After Union, the power of legislating for
 this country would still remain vested in the Parliament of
 Ireland, if, at this day, the Parliament of England be that
 of Yorkshire, or the Parliament of Ireland be that of
 Dublin; and, if the contrast between the number of Irish and
 British Representatives in the United Parliament, were less silly
 and delusive than I contend it is, still, of the inferiority on the
 part of Ireland I might say, as on another occasion you have
 done, that “if it created a *theoretick* difference in the consti-
 “tution of the two kingdoms, which renders ours inferior, it
 “is one, not injurious to us, but necessary from our situation
 “in the Empire, and which secures Union and Connexion on
 “a firm and lasting basis.”† With far more justice may this
 language be appropriated to the measure which I am support-
 ing, than to the more invidious, yet less effectual one to which
 you apply it.

Union would proportion Irish Legislative weight to the
 importance of this country, in point of territory, &c. and thus
 that inferiority, (which, when our interests were identified,
 must besides be uninjurious,) would be one arising from our
 physical situation, and derived rather from the law of nature
 than of convention; but the modification of Poynings’ Law,
 which you extol,* for having put one of the co-ordinate states
 of the *Independent* Irish Parliament in absolute dependence on
 the British Legislature,—this statute, I say, without which

D

you

§ This answer will also apply to p. 8,—where the same reasoning is
 insinuated in the following passage:—“While Ireland retains a Parlia-
 “ment, she has the means of redress.”

† P. 24. * P. 24 and 25.

you admit that the boasted arrangement of 1782 would have been imperfect, || lamely and incompletely achieves its purpose of strengthening the connexion, by delivering Irish Independence into the guardianship of a British Minister, and thus proportioning our inferiority, not to our relative natural situation, but to the possible caprice, or ignorance, or wickedness, or usurping policy of an Individual, or a Cabinet.—I will admit, what it might be disrespectful to assert, that the arrangement of 1782 was imperfect, (and if so, its deficiencies were ill supplied by the statute which I have just noticed;) but it, in my opinion, laid a glorious foundation for that measure, which I still conceive to be necessary, towards permanently consolidating the strength and interests of the Empire: it raised us from that subservient situation, in which England might have dictated to us the terms of Union; and by restoring or asserting the Independence of this country, it enabled us to treat on equal terms, and to dictate, in our turn, the only Union we would accept. I will not disparage that settlement which fixed the Constitution of this kingdom, by, on the one hand, forgetting that it has raised us to a situation, from whence we can treat securely and advantageously with the Sister Country; or, on the other hand, by insisting that it has paralysed our Parliament, and precluded them from directing those powers which a Supreme Legislature must possess, towards accomplishing what they deem conducive to the prosperity of the Irish People.

But, “if the work of 1782 was incomplete, why were not the measures followed up to their completion?”* Why was not an Union then accomplished? many causes may have prevented it. Perhaps this was not precisely the further measure, which was in the contemplation of the ministry of that day: perhaps the prejudices, or if you please, the temper of the Irish people, were not then such as to promise a cordial reception of the measure: to have offered Union, when we demanded independence—might have seemed a sort of
jealous

jealous compromise, and brought a suspicion upon the project, as if it were something less valuable than what our Parliament had asked. In the excited state of the Irish mind, at that day; it might have been impolitick to have afforded them even a less pretext for jealousy and discontent: nay, the coolest Irish patriotism—if an Union had been then proposed—might have plausibly, at least, objected to the incorporation of the countries, under the relative circumstances in which they stood: might have demanded a recognition of Irish Independence, as a preliminary security for our obtaining Union, on beneficial and honourable terms, and meantime required a trial of the effects of this Independence, as a reasonable experiment, and one gratifying to the feelings of a proud and generous people. If any evils have arisen from Independence, yet before it had existence, they could not be felt, and might not be foreseen. The trial, however, has now been fully made. It is since 1782, that the Commercial Propositions have been refused, that the transaction of the Regency has taken place, and that bills, for Parliamentary Reform, have *fortunately* been rejected, which, if they had passed, (as they might have done) would have sapped the connexion, by destroying the similitude of the Imperial Parliaments, and giving Ireland a Legislature, differently constituted from that of Britain. It is since 1782, that France has become a monster, devastating Europe, and manifesting such distinguished hostility to Britain, as calls upon us, to consolidate the defensive force of that empire, of which, you admit, we form “a constituent and inseparable part.”* It is within the same interval, that under French auspices, separatism has flourished so formidably in this country, and ripened to a Rebellion, of which, (spite of the “perpetual pledge of amity,”† by which we were pronounced to have been “indissolubly connected,”‡ in 1782,) the object was not to strengthen our connexion with Great Britain. It is since 1782, that religious discord has assumed a character of so much animosity, as to suggest, that whilst, on the one hand, it may, in our present situation,

* P. 26.

† P. 31.

‡ P. 33.

situation, be dangerous to grant, it may, on the other hand, (if a divided people is an evil) be impolitick to withhold.

These several facts and circumstances, and the reflections which they supply, may have furnished many arguments for an Union, which did not offer themselves in 1782; and, by reducing theory to practice, may have considerably strengthened those reasons, which existed even then: in short, there are a thousand obvious causes, which may have prevented the accomplishment of an Union at that period, and which it would be nearly as little difficult, as it would be material to enumerate. And, if after all, the measure has been too long delayed, does it follow that it ought in prudence to be finally abandoned? and this, at a moment, when the events passing in the world demonstrate its expedience, emphatically and clearly; and even render it doubtful, whether Union ought not to be adopted, on terms less advantageous than it is in our power to ensure? In vain do you ask "what reliance we can place "on the British Minister's adherence to any compact, on "which he might rest his projected Union, if he has already "violated a compact solemnly made and ratified?"* Your question assumes that the agreement of 1782 has been infringed; a position, which I have denied, and, as I hope, disproved. But this renowned adjustment, (which you are mistaken in supposing that Union will disturb,) has showered "down upon us, blessings, trade, and affluence,"§ almost incalculable. After having begged to except from this list of blessings—the internal discord—the attempts at separation—the deep-laid conspiracies—the rebellion and invasion, which we have witnessed—and are still witnessing, and which have all occurred since 1782, I would express my doubt, whether these advances in commercial prosperity are fairly attributable to the adjustment in question. Without the aid of any adjustment, if we believe Rose and Chalmers, (nay, if we do not shut our eyes on an obtrusive truth) Great Britain has in the same interval, made advances as enormously exceeding those, which

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she had made in former periods. We cannot impute these to any thing that passed in 1782. Why then should we trace the accelerated progress of Irish prosperity to the constitutional occurrences of that period? Events, from which might have been more naturally expected that domestick content, and tranquillity, which they have utterly failed to produce! Why may we not rather attribute such rapid strides to affluence, to those causes, whatever they be, which have aggrandised Great Britain, and consider them as our portion of the common benefits of imperial greatness, and as a motive for strengthening that connexion, from whence they have flowed? From our free trade,† they may indeed be in a great degree derivable: but that freedom will not be abridged by Union, and was not acquired in 1782.

I have already protested against being held to any more strict arrangement, than a mere regular pursuit of your reasoning will supply:—I am answering your argument, and cannot, if I wished it, be more systematick than you are; unless I deviate from that course which you have prescribed, and to which it is my business to adhere.—Therefore, having followed you in your investigation of the adjustment of 1782, having digressed *with you* from the transactions of that period, and *with you* recurred to them again, I now accompany you to the discussions of 1785.

The Duke of Rutland, at the opening of the Session, recommends “to the earnest investigation” of Parliament “those objects of trade and commerce, between Great Britain and Ireland,” (you say “mark the expression,”) “*which had not yet received their complete adjustment.*”^{*}—The meaning of these expressions is sufficiently apparent: they were made use of on the subject of *commerce*, merely, and involve no more than the assertion which you yourself make, that from 1782 “no advance was made as to commerce in general, except
“ what

† Granted by the British Parliament.

* P. 16.

" what was done by Yelverton's Bill ;" * — the inadequacy of which you had shewn in page 30, and also shewed by your support of the commercial arrangement in 1785. And you must allow me to take *this occasion* of acquiescing in the truth of your position, in page 45, that " to select general expressions made use of on the subject of commerce, and apply them to the subject of Constitution, shews no great candour in reasoning." This doctrine of yours also applies to the observation which you make on another part of the Duke of Rutland's Speech, in which he states a " common interest in treaties with foreign States, as forming a bond of mutual connexion." † This passage you contrast with Lord Castlereagh's opinion, (in which I most heartily acquiesce) that the consideration of the federative relations of the British Empire, with foreign States, furnishes strong inducements to a Union. You forget, that the Duke spoke merely of commercial treaties ; and that (as you very properly remark) " to select expressions, made use of on one subject, and apply them to another, shews no great candour in reasoning."

With respect to your own conduct at this last mentioned period, far be it from me to make, what after all might be an unsuccessful attempt, in demonstrating your inconsistency, to detect spots in the political character of a man, so superior to myself. In shortly contrasting your past, and present conduct, my object is only to tempt you to revise the latter ; or, if I cannot accomplish this, then to lessen the weight of your authority against me, by balancing one opinion of yours against the other.

You admit yourself to have said, in 1785, " that things could not remain as they were : that commercial jealousy was roused, and would encrease with two Independent Legislatures, if these did not mutually declare the principles whereby their powers should be separately employed, in directing the common concerns of trade ; and that without this united interest

* P. 35.

† P. 37.

"interest of commerce, political Union would receive many shocks; and separation of interest must threaten separation of connexion."* In vain, Sir, would you dilute the strong effect of these assertions, and soften the contrasted colouring with which they relieve your present conduct.—On what occasion, and for what purpose, did you make use of these positions?—to shew that the two Legislatures should enter into a compact, (for this is what was proposed) respecting the mode of forming their commercial regulations. When you declared that things could not remain as they were, your meaning, exclusively, and evidently, was that such a compact was necessary to the security of the connexion: when you observed that the jealousy, which was roused, would encrease with two Independent Legislatures,—you manifestly implied that this distinctness was pregnant with dangers to the connexion, which required the correction of some imperial compact, that, qualifying this independence, should be binding upon both;—and in adding that, without that commercial Union, (which nothing but this compact could permanently secure,) the political Union would be exposed to shocks, which would threaten the connexion,—you, in my mind, promulgated a doctrine, which was as true, as it is irreconcilable with your present opinions.

Any other interpretation than this, which I have given of the passages above cited, would render them impertinent to the propositions which you employed them to support. How then can you now assert that "things do not remain as they were,"† when you are aware, that no compact has been entered into? and that the Irish Parliament is not bound to conform to the British laws, which may be made respecting certain matters of trade and navigation? or, how can you desire that things should not be modified, when you admit they cannot remain as they are?‡ and that the security of the connexion is endangered by the want of that compact, which, in consequence of the distinctness of our Legislatures, has been rejected?—

"The

* P. 45, 49.

† P. 45.

‡ P. 37.

“The passing” (you say) “of the Commercial Propositions
 “into a law, would have completely answered all the purposes
 “of the present project,”* (of Union :) without acquiescing in
 the rectitude of this doctrine, I may yet remark that they
 have not passed into a law, and therefore, that, even con-
 formably to your own principles, a Union may be necessary.*

But things, you tell us, have not remained as they were.
 “The evil, of commercial jealousies, acting upon the laws
 “of two Independent Legislatures, has been remedied by the
 “good sense, and mutual interest of each country, from time
 “to time passing all laws necessary, to prevent the inconvenience
 “of commercial jealousies.”† Sir, the danger is, that the
 exercise, by distinct legislatures, of their undoubted privileges,
 may produce imperial dissension; and that the good sense of
 the countries, in having as yet prevented the mischief from
 arising, has annihilated that risk, which springs eternally, and
 inevitably, from such a legislative organization, is a position,
 which it is more necessary, than it is easy, to demonstrate.

You seem, too, in 1785, not to have foreseen the all-heal-
 ing efficacy of this good sense, when you argued so strongly
 for the necessity of a commercial compact; nor does it afford
 an uninstrusive lesson of human prejudice, and inconsistency,
 to find a person of your distinguished sagacity and talents, in
 in one place,† considering the Great Seal of Britain to be a
 better security, than the good sense of Ireland, for a continu-
 ance of the connexion between the two countries; and, in
 another place,‡ preferring the junction, which this good sense,
 you say, has formed, to the guaranty which a solemn com-
 pact would bestow; though a casuist might doubt whether
 that roll of parchment, which you so despise,|| be a more frail
 assurance than the piece of wax, in which you place such
 implicit confidence. Some, I know, have pushed this con-
 tempt of parchment farther than you do, and even extended
 their

* P. 51.

† P. 25.

‡ P. 51.

|| Ibid.

their sacrilegious irreverence to wax. On their arrogance, a parchment, adorned with the Great Seal of England on its right side, and of Ireland on its left, can make no impression of respect. They affirm, (but they are calumniators of our Constitution) that Irish independence (which they admit to be remarkably well-sounding words) is no where to be found, but in certain rolls of parchment, called 22 Geo. III. c. 53, and 23 Geo. III. c. 28; and these, they are so far from respecting, that they quite mistake their operation, which they conceive to have been (I was about to say, *purely*) of a commercial nature, and to have erected an Irish aristocracy into a company, for exclusively carrying on the trade of Jobbing, and of Parliament. This commerce they indeed contend to have flourished under their protection, but doubt whether the prosperity of the country has advanced in proportion: whether the commodity in which they traffick—I mean connexion—was not secured as well to England, and less expensively and gallingly to this country, before their aristocratick monopoly had accrued; and whether, in short, British ascendancy might not, with as much advantage to both kingdoms, have remained in the keeping of an English Parliament, as been transferred to Irish Commissioners, to administer. Nay, they insist, that by the ingenuity of British Councils, this wax and parchment has been manufactured into a mask, beneath which, English Superiority, wearing the features of Irish Independence, has ranged without control, and been less susceptible of confinement, within the limits of that ascendant, which, (I speak this seriously) Britain ought to possess: which belongs to our situation, and is necessary to our connexion; since I hold it for a maxim, that this country must be united with, or separate from, or in a certain degree practically dependent upon Britain.

In truth, I conceive you, Sir, in 1785, to have very signally recorded your concurrence in my doctrine, as to the propriety of such control. I mean by the support which I apprehend you gave to propositions that were resisted by Messrs. Flood

and Grattan, on the ground of their "interfering with the Legislative Authority of the Irish Parliament,"—violating that compact of 1782, on which you now so much rely,—and "putting an end to the free Constitution of Ireland."* And as, in truth, that commercial system went to bind this country in certain cases, by the acts of a Parliament *in which she was not represented*, (by pledging her to the adoption of such acts when made, and thus so far divesting her of all Legislative Freedom,) I am the more surprised at your constitutional scruples about a Union, which would not bind Ireland by the acts of *any legislature, but one in which her aristocracy, wealth, and population, were adequately represented*; and I cannot easily reconcile your affirmation, that not "an atom of our Constitution"† was surrendered by the plan which you recommended in 1785,—with your position that the system now proposed involves its utter annihilation. To me that measure seems somewhat more than merely eligible, which, by identifying even to vulgar eyes, the interests of both countries, will appease the factions, and promote the wealth and tranquillity of this:—which, instead of destroying the substance of our establishment, will animate its lifeless forms with the pure and genuine spirit of the British constitution, and give it a vigour that shall scatter blessings through this too-long drooping land.

But will Union produce these advantages to our country?—This, I admit, is the real question. The intrinsic merits of the measure form the true matter for our discussion;—to which the competence of Parliament, and the compact of 1782, are about as pertinent as Lord Macartney's embassy to China.

You ask, ‡ what defects, tending to separation, the present state of our connexion involves? For my part I discern enow to

* See Woodfall's Sketch of the Debate; and N. B. That these observations of Messrs. F. and G. were applied to the *Bill* of Mr. Orde, which the then Chancellor of the Exchequer supported.

† P. 44.

‡ P. 52.

to produce difficulty in selection, and tediousness in enumeration. If our Independence be real, I see a range of possible dissensions, as wide as is the sphere of legislative dominion in a state. I see that jealousy, which will be apt to mistake acts of animosity, for assertions of independence, conspiring with a thousand nameless contingencies, to turn this theory into practice; to loosen the connexion, and "strike the Crown into the hazard." If our Independence were merely nominal, the thing would be still worse: it might involve a dependance the more galling, and aggravated, because concealed: at all events, it would be a fraud; and would contaminate, and render odious, that connexion, of which it made a part; whilst it might expose our ostensibly independent Parliament to the distrust and abhorrence of the people; might bring their most meritorious acts, and those most necessary towards supporting the connexion, into suspicion, and make them pass for symptoms of corrupt servility. Again, if our Independence were, as it might be, something fluctuating between reality and name,—substantial on some occasions, and but apparent upon others,—it seems to me, that the likely consequence would be, its combining the mischiefs of both systems: in any of the three cases, I discern in our distinctness, (that is to say, in the theory of our present relation to Britain,) a store of weapons, whereof faction might avail itself, to wound and sever a connexion so frail, that even a pique between two individuals, on opposite sides of the channel, might give to its friends some reasonable ground for trembling.

If, in our present Imperial Arrangements, there lurk these tendencies to disruption,—have the situation and views of France so little aided their effect, as to render it unwise in us to wrest from our foe, the arms which we had inadvertently committed to his hands? Have separatists at home looked idly at the weakness of our system, or profited by that weakness, in attempting its destruction? Has our populace manifested such a contented fondness for the present establishment, or that celebrated compact of 1782, which secured it, as that we need entertain fears.

fears of modifying it, lest we might thereby damp the *loyalty*, evinced by our liege pikemen, at Ross, or Vinegar Hill?

The history of (would I could say the late) rebellion,—the descents upon our coasts,—the fatigues of our Yeomanry,—the stern, though necessary, provisions of our Legislature,—the scenes of scourging in our metropolis,—the multitude of our troops, with all the train of consoling details, which attend on civil discord and disaffection, accompanied with the comments of the empty, arrogant, and applauded Tone—will supply answers to some of the enquiries which I have made, and suggest whether the defects of our system be practical or merely theoretick.

But you, Sir, “can find only two defects even suggested: “the one of Peace and War, including treaties; the other of “a Regency.”*

As to the first, you say, that as the two kingdoms may happen to dissent from each other, so a disagreement between two Houses of Parliament may take place; and therefore the argument which proves the expediency of consolidating the Kingdoms, would go to recommend a consolidation of the two Houses of Parliament; *quod est absurdum*.

This reasoning appears liable to some strong objections; which I shall take the liberty of offering without much order,—suggesting them as they occur.

First. One Empire, with two Legislatures, is somewhat analogous to the idea of one man, with two wills; and is indeed little short of a contradiction in terms: therefore, that the legislative powers of an empire should not be scattered, but concentrated, is at least desirable, if not essential, to constituting and giving existence to the Empire.

But one Legislature, consisting of distinct branches, is perfectly intelligible in point of theory, and highly beneficial in point of practice.

Therefore,

Therefore, legislatively to blend two kingdoms, if they be parts of one Empire, would be to remove an inconsistency, and obtain a good; whereas, to consolidate two branches of the Legislature, would be to produce a mischief, and this without the pretext of having had any anomaly to remove.

The British Legislature is divided into distinct branches, because the community, which it represents, is split into different interests: but the kingdoms of the British Empire have but one interest, if properly understood; and therefore the necessity for division does not exist.

It contributes to constitutional freedom, to have the branches of a Legislature distinct: it contributes to imperial energy, to have the Legislative of the empire consolidated, not dispersed.

If two Houses of Parliament disagree—the effect is, that the measure falls to the ground; and in matters of internal regulation, this may happen without ill consequence; but how languid will the Empire be, if in great imperial concerns it must remain inactive, paralysed by the disagreement of its two Legislatures!

Why are the Houses of the British Legislature kept distinct? In order to give them an opportunity of disagreeing with effect: in order to give efficacy and operation to their disagreement; and make each of the branches a check upon the other.

When you prescribe* separate Legislatures, for the British Empire, is it with a view to give efficacy to their dissensions? *If it be not*, you cannot support your measure, on the theory on which the construction of the British Parliament is founded: *if it be*, you do not much consult either the tranquillity or vigour of the Empire.

The British system of Legislative balance is compounded of three parts; and involves in it a principle as well of Union, as of Separation. It possesses, in the Royal Estate, a guide to
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the deliberations of the other two,—and middle term, which connects and consolidates them into one Parliament.—But in your Imperial System, I perceive the seeds of nothing, but wrangle and repulsion. It is composed of but two estates. It provides amply for dissension; but nothing for harmony.

His Majesty has, indeed, at the opening of the present session, in his Speech to both Legislatures, less remembered their distinctness, than that they formed a great council of the empire. But you condemn the Minister who advised this Speech: you applaud the Irish House of Commons, which declined the royal guidance to deliberation; and inveigh against the presumption of the British Legislature, in having paid more attention to the recommendation of the Crown.

One word more on this subject, and I have done.

You say that “ Theory says the two Houses of Legislature may disagree; and that theory *only* says the same of the separate Parliaments of the two kingdoms.”

I answer, that if theory had (which it has not, or they would not have been so divided,) affirmed that the Houses of Parliament might mischievously disagree, it would have been amply and repeatedly refuted by practice; whereas, if the same theory had denied that the Independent Parliaments of the empire might most importantly and alarmingly dissent,—the annals of 1785 and 1789 would be sufficient to contradict them.—Nay, the history of the latter year might render it doubtful whether you were warranted in pronouncing* that it was “ *unnecessary to shew that, by law, the Executive is, and ever must be, the same, and with the same constitutional powers in each kingdom.*”—Powers limited and unlimited seem not to be the same; and therefore the address of both Houses of the Irish Parliament in 1789, appears to me to have given us an Executive, with different constitutional powers from those, which were likely to be conferred in England. I say
from

from those which were likely to be conferred in England; for the British Parliament had not as yet appointed any Regent; and therefore, by our promptitude, we risked having an Executive different as well in person, as in powers. The Regency Bill, which was lately introduced, and in support of which you made the Speech which has produced my present Letter, admits that, upon that memorable occasion, the distinctness of our Imperial Legislatures did not obviously contribute to the stability of our Imperial Connexion. That (not declaratory but enacting) bill has, however, made many other inadvertent admissions, besides the deliberate one which I have noticed:—for having no otherwise escaped from one class of valid objections, than by exposing itself to others of equal force,—in its text and its annotations,* its provisions and its rejection, it reluctantly admitted—that the evil which it had recognised, it could not cure; and that none but an empiric would attempt purifying an acrimonious habit, by clapping a plaister of basilicon to the eruption.

But, supposing the present state of our connexion to be defective, you doubt whether the defect be more than theoretick, and reprobate Union, as a remedy worse than the disease. You illustrate the question, by the case of juries from the vicinage †.—I have too sincere a respect for ancient establishments, to attempt impeaching this legal provision with respect to juries. But having got on what may, perhaps, be truly called the dunghill of my profession, let me suggest to you that the wisdom and liberality of latter times, guided probably by experience, has greatly detracted from the force of your illustration. The statute (of Anne, I believe,) which, instead of packing juries from the ward, directed them to be summoned from the body of the county at large,—gave a most christian-like enlargement to the culprit, or suitor's neighbourhood; and resembled (so far as the analogy which you

* The clauses which had been struck out in Committee, were printed in the form of Notes to the Bill, and were as much at variance with the clauses which had been let to stand, as these latter were inconsistent amongst themselves.

† P. 56.

you have chosen is just,) referring the suits of the Irish people to the tribunal of an Imperial Parliament.

Besides, the law contemplates, and corrects, those "prejudices, animosities, and friendships," which you notice, and to which you suppose it blind.—Where there is reason to suspect that a fair trial cannot be had in the vicinage, (though that vicinage embraces the whole of a county,) the courts, to prevent injustice, will change the venue.—But prejudices, alas! will spread themselves from counties to provinces, and may taint an entire kingdom at the last! and if a suitor people should distrust the impartiality of the grand inquest,—how assure them, but in changing the venue, by an Union? But "local knowledge is the very essence of a jury's capacity to administer its functions?"*—Be it so; will not Ireland return a pannel to the United Parliament? Is a jury of the county of Louth less qualified to perform its functions, sitting in Dublin, than if it sat in the town of Drogheda?—And may not the Imperial Parliament combine possession of local knowledge, with exemption from local prejudice? Or will you complain that, on this grand inquest of the empire, the representatives of its British, as well as of its Irish district, claim to sit?

But the British Minister's object in pressing a Union is taxation!† the grant of eight millions which has been made this year, and which you notice, might alone be sufficient to refute your imputation. But suppose it were not; the man who after having observed, even cursorily, our history for some years back,—after having glanced his eye upon the present state of Ireland, and the world,—and looked as far into our future (civil and religious) prospects as he dares,—can see no motive, but a pecuniary one, for desiring a Legislative Union, and assign no views but of finance and taxes, to the Minister who proposes it, must have a mind very differently constituted from mine.—Blind and weak that Minister must be, who, in a period like the present, does not aim at rendering the subject satisfied and

* P. 57.

† P. 58.

and happy: who does not prefer possessing the hearts, to grasping the purses of the people: who does not perceive that, considering the spirit of insubordination which has gone abroad, and the jealous keenness, with which even flaws in government are marked, ruling powers ought, if it were but from mere policy, to pursue measures of conciliation, liberality, and justice: that before they aim at rendering their system profitable, they should take care that it is secure; and not, like Archimedes, be making calculations when an enemy is at their doors.—It is a libel on Mr. Pitt to say that the purse of the Nation is his object.—It is not he, that has taxed the Empire: it is the Directory of France. It is he that has contrived to lighten the burthen, while he imposed it; and to spread and strengthen the commercial basis by which it was to be sustain'd. Under his auspices it is, that perpetual drains have been turned into mere temporary annuities; and Publick Credit has been upheld by a mode as simple as efficacious: that Great Britain has been at once diminishing her debts, and adding to her resources; and this in a degree so rapid and immense, that the incumbrances which she is paying off, she might disregard; and that her imposts are become little else than a sort of import duty on her wealth. But the Minister, you say,* will not be contented with our purse; he is also desirous to deprive us of our trade. These charges appear to me to be strangely incompatible with each other. It is as if a parson should wish to spoil the crop from which he was to receive his tythe; or a landlord to lay waste the farm out of which he was to be paid his rent. It seems to me, therefore, that you must elect between the imputations which you would cast on Mr. Pitt; and cannot bring more than an alternative charge against him. I will suppose that you have assigned him, as his motive, the desire of getting the national purse into his possession. Is it not likely then that he declares no more than his real opinion, when he represents an Union as tending to secure and advance our prosperity? Is an empty purse the mighty object of his financial ambition? Could he have the cruelty to forbid our putting a few pieces

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into the coffer, of which he held the key himself? Or would he prefer possessing all its emptiness at Westminster, to leaving it here in our custody, well supplied,—with the privilege of thrusting his hand into it from time to time?

From this discussion of Mr. Pitt's motives, you return * to the question of Regency; and it being my business to attend you in your arguments, I make no excuse for digressing with you to this subject.

You say that, upon that occasion, the difference between the two countries, which you admit to have been “unfortunate,” † and which arose from the distinctness of the Imperial Legislatures, regarded not the person of the Regent, but merely the limitation of his power. Though this were so, such disparity of prerogative would in effect have impaired a principle of our Constitution; and given the countries two Executives, instead of one. But you seem to me to abridge the true extent of the difference, which took place between the Parliaments at that period. You forget not only that the coincidence with respect to person was accidental, and therefore cannot be relied on as proof of conformity between the Legislatures,—but that, in fact, no Regent was ever appointed for Great Britain. His Majesty's recovery interrupted the British proceedings in their progress; and however bordering upon strict certainty our conjectures may be, and are, that the Heir Apparent would have been the person nominated, this will not lessen the truth or relevancy of my assertion, that the Irish Parliament named a Regent, before one had been named in Britain; and conferred that authority unlimited, which the English Parliament was restricting; and that in doing so they risked having an Executive different in person, and more than risked having one different in respect to powers. But they were not (you say) the Parliaments,—they were only the *two* truncated Estates, that differed on that occasion. ‡ In truth, the act of annexation has (by an Union)

secured

* P. 60.

† P. 59.

‡ P. 59.

secured the harmony of the *third*; and so long as that statute shall prevail, I answer for the perpetual amity of the King of Ireland and Great Britain.

But the proceedings of our two estates, you think, at that time were of no avail: for “notwithstanding what passed in
“1789, the act of annexation extending to the case of a Re-
“gent, and the law of 1782, about the Great Seal, having
“besides put the matter out of doubt, there does no real
“difficulty exist;—and the Regent of Britain can alone re-
“present the third estate of the Irish Legislature.” *

But spite of the efficacy of your argument to shew the impropriety of what took place in 1789,—and spite of my respect for the waxen dignity of that idol, which was set up in 1782, to guard the connexion between the countries,—I should tremble to see that connexion await the issue of a combat, in which two branches of the Irish Legislature, unchecked and uncontradicted by any third estate, were in array on one side,—and a piece of wax opposed to their decision on the other. Nor does it seem that we differ in sentiment on this point;—for although you pronounce the case to be “free from
“all difficulty and doubt,” yet, in order to

— “make assurance double sure,

“And take a bond of fate,”

you support, not a declaratory, but enacting bill, which purports to remove those doubts, of which you have denied the existence;—or rather (to state the operation of that bill more truly) which, agreeing with you, that this was not a case of doubt, distinctly contradicts your opinion on past law, and denies that, without the provisions of this act, the British Regent is *ipso facto* the Irish third Estate.

Be this as it may, however, I concur with you in the expediency of preventing the repetition of such dissensions. We do but differ in the means, which we deem calculated to attain this end. In the transaction of 1789, I see no more than a single consequence of the distinctness of our Legislatures;—
a cause

a cause adequate to the production of many mischiefs beside. Whilst you, therefore, are content with plucking off the fruit; I am rather for eradicating the prolifick cause: while you are making topical applications to the symptom; I am endeavouring to remove the disease.

You affirm that there is already an Union between the countries.* Do you cite the Regency to prove that it is a close and firm one? Did you support Mr. Fitzgerald's bill to record your opinion of the present solidity of our connexion? And do you continue to trust implicitly in that recreant wax, which deserted its post so shamefully in 1789, and left the field open to our two Houses of Parliament?

But, "Union is a merging of the Irish Parliament in the British."† No: it is only a merger of it in the Imperial Legislature. But suppose your position granted: what then? This vile measure, forsooth, will leave us in as ill a political situation, as Wales or Yorkshire are in at present! Union does not take away our Parliament: it merely changes the residence of that body; and in regulating the number of Irish and British Representatives in the United Legislature, strikes that equitable proportion to the territory; population, and resources of these respective limbs of the empire,—which, while our Parliaments remained distinct, it was unnecessary to strike; and which, when settled, will leave this country in as secure a situation, as any equal tract of territory in the British dominions now enjoys. But Mr. Pitt, in recommending this measure, has stated Ireland "as the vulnerable part of the empire;—torn by contending factions."§ —Was the statement untrue in point of fact? or immaterial in point of argument for a change? For its truth, we have some bloody documents; supported by the testimony of Hoche and Humbert, and an host of foreign enemies, and domestick traitors: we have the representations of Tone to the government of France, as to the state of Ireland so long ago as 1793;|| and the Report of our Committees of Secrecy, as to its more recent situation. To those who are friendly to our connexion with Great Britain, is it no argument for a change of the nature

* P. 61. † Ibid. § P. 62.

|| This appeared on the Trial of Jackson for High Treason.

nature of that connexion, that its present state exposes it to the foes' endeavours to dissolve it? and is there no ground for presuming, that the measure which identifies this country with Britain, must render it as little vulnerable, as our enemies think this latter district of the empire to be at present? It is not the "Roll of Parchment"|| which will effect the change: it is the operation of those provisions, which that parchment will contain: the cordiality which it will announce, and record: the liberal and cementing system, which it will legalize and introduce.

But Union, instead of assuaging, tranquilising, and fortifying this country, "will deprive Ireland of the resident gentry, and "upper ranks;" (with their amazing and edifying stock of good morals, and good example!) will rob "villages and estates "of their benevolent protectors; and encouraging land-jobbers "and pirates, will degrade the hospitality of the old mansion- "houses into the niggardly penury of agents dwellings."†— It must be confessed, that if this be the necessary consequence of Union, it is difficult to conceive what object the British Minister could have in desiring it; or how the Irish Lords came to vote as they did on the first day of our session: nay, how on the same day there came to be a majority on that side in the House of Commons. Our Lords must have been strangely blind to their own interests: our Commons under the temporary influence of an extraordinary delusion; and Mr. Pitt, who has not usually past for a silly personage, must be acting under the grossest infatuation. Apprehensive that Ireland is not sufficiently discontented, nor France enough disposed to take advantage of her discontents, he must be supposed eager to adopt a system, of which the manifest effect will be to render this country more vulnerable, and the Empire less secure. I shall not examine the details of that picture which you have drawn; and which I take to be a mere fancy piece: resembling nothing which Union would produce to Ireland;—and *contrastedly unlike to every thing which it has produced to Scotland.*

You desire me to look to Scotland, and Wales, which are united.* I do; and ask you, are they less free than Ireland,
or

or than England? Are they, in proportion to their natural advantages, less prosperous than we are? I have not heard of any suspension of the Habeas Corpus act in Wales; or of the stern provisions of a law for the suppression of rebellion. I have heard indeed of a descent upon the Welch coast;---and from comparing what happened on that occasion, with what took place on the landing of the French at Killala, I conclude that Union has no tendency to impair allegiance; and that the united Welch are as loyal as the inhabitants of disunited Ireland. But you ask, is Scotland, or is England herself, exempt from the taint of disaffection?† and you infer, particularly from the case of Scotland, that Union is no protection. I am content to meet you on this ground; and to assert, that Ireland has been the foyer of conspiracy,---and centre of that sedition, of which the flames may, in a less degree, have reached other quarters of the Empire. Thus, if a comparison of the situation of the respective parts of the Empire proves any thing, as I admit it does,---it proves that Union would contribute to the tranquillity of Ireland.

It demonstrates what was too evident to need being shewn; that by diminishing the chances of separation, you will discourage *those attempts at it, which have disturbed our country*; and that the more complete is the connexion, the less easily can it be dissolved.

These considerations lead me to a part of this discussion, which, I confess, I do not enter on, without embarrassment.—To encounter you, on a point of commerce, would require uncommon strength;---and unfortunately my qualification is uncommon weakness. But I derive courage from the impregnable truth of the opinion which I am supporting: from the concurrence of Mr. Pitt, who recommends this measure: who pursues it, you say, with financial views; and whom you admit to be an eminently able financier;---which it requires no profound commercial investigations to pronounce he could not be, if he sought to carry a measure, detrimental to the prosperity of Ireland.

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On the whole, therefore, I meet you even upon this ground ; with much the same superstitious confidence in the justice of my cause, as in the days of chivalry would have induced me to throw down my gage, with a " God defend the right ! " against some abler combatant than myself.

" How, or why," say you " should Union diffuse British wealth, or induce British capital to settle here ? " Let me select one from a thousand answers ; and say, by promoting our tranquillity.

But how will it promote this ? I have already tried, and may, before I have done, again endeavour to shew. Meantime let me observe, that the question which I have imputed to you, withdraws us from the present enquiry ; and admits that if Union promotes tranquillity, it must advance our commerce.

In truth this is an admission, which, *important as it is*, you yet cannot avoid making. You cannot avoid admitting, that without internal harmony, all other requisites to commercial greatness are unavailing : there can be neither Industry, nor its creature, Wealth. In the storms of a disturbed political atmosphere, Commerce will

" Forbid her gems to swell, her shades to rise,
" Nor trust her blossoms to the churlish skies ; "

It is no declamation,---it is sound reason---to affirm that in establishing tranquillity, Union must so promote our trade, as that even supposing (contrary to the fact) it in some respects restrained it,---yet it must, on the average, be eminently beneficial. It is no proof of an argumentative, but of a little mind, to withdraw from this grand and general view of the subject,---to lose ourselves, and perplex our hearers, in petty calculations. Yet often---have I seen wide views mistaken for Extravagance ; and the minutiae of Imbecility worshipped

worshipped as Wisdom and Discretion. It is no flourish,—it is a truth,—to state that by removing the terrors which obscure and blast our land, we reinstate it in the possession of whatever advantages Nature gave it; and relieve the British possessor of capital from all apprehensions of availing himself of those advantages, and settling it in that part of the Empire, where it will be most productive. I will ask any candid man, what, after Union, *political* difference there could be between Ireland, and the same quantity of British territory in England? or what should deter the capitalist from establishing himself in this district of the empire, if its *natural* situation made it suitable to his purposes? Will any man deny that Ireland is possessed of eminent natural advantages? or that hitherto some fatal impediment has prevented them from being fruitful? No man will be believed, who controverts either position. No man can expect credit, who affects to doubt, that the distinctness of the kingdoms, and consequent supposed insecurity of their connexion,—the convulsions which have depreciated the value of property, and damped the spirit of commercial enterprise and exertion,—and which having aimed at destroying the connexion, might be attributed to that distinctness, which rendered it insecure,—the views of our enemies directed peculiarly to this country, and involving a presumption, that they discovered some frailty in the connexion,—that these, I say, were causes, adequate to restrain our commerce, and deter capital from settling amongst us;—and that they are causes which Union would remove.

Observe the language which the Dean of Gloucester puts into the mouths of certain English manufacturers, who were opposing the puniness of their selfish details to the prosperity of the empire:—"They" (the Irish) "would run away with our trade:"—(You differ from this conjecture of the English traders:)—"Who" (replies the Dean) "would run away with it? or where would they run to?" "Why, truly, our own people" (the Irish) "would carry some part of a manufacture from us to themselves."—"But what detriment
" would

" would this be to the Publick? the people of Yorkshire
 " have done the same by Gloucestershire and Wiltshire."*—
 Thus this writer admitted (and the English traders urged) that
 Union would carry capital into Ireland; but he wisely added,
 that this would not be a loss to England, but an acquisition to
 the empire.

Truly has the British Minister asserted, that the interests of
 the two countries should be taken together.; and that a man
 cannot speak as a true Irishman, without speaking as a true
 Englishman; nor *vice versa*†. Union could not contribute to
 British greatness, without encreasing the prosperity of Ireland.
 The Imperial Advantages which it produced, would not stagnate
 in England: they must ultimately circulate through all the
 limbs of the British empire.

Having protested against their conclusiveness, I attend you
 into your details.

After enumerating the four principal manufactures of Eng-
 land, you affirm that the want of fuel will prevent their
 migrating into Ireland.‡

Suppose (however improbable) that they should not; and
 what does this prove? only that the capital which travelled
 hither, would employ itself in a mode more conformable to the
 natural soil, means, and situation of this country.

But you forget the comparative cheapness of labour and
 provision here. Undoubtedly, in England, a manufacture in
 which fuel was wanting, would not travel from the neigh-
 bourhood of a plentiful colliery, to a country where coals
 were scarcer, while the price of food and labour remained the
 same. But (not to mention that the objection will not apply
 to the chance of manufactures being established on our coasts)
 the

* Dean Tucker's Proposal.

† See Mr. Pitt's Speech, of which, since I began this Letter, I have
 obtained a Copy. ‡ P. 69.

the comparative lowness of wages, and rate of provision here, might more than compensate the greater dearness of fuel, and either afford, on the average, a temptation, or at least so equalize the opposite inducements in this respect, as to leave the adventurer free to weigh the respective benefits of an Irish and English situation in other points.---Nay again, these other advantages might so predominate on the side of Ireland, as to redeem the objection of scarcity of fuel,---though not compensated in the degree supposed, by the cheapness of that food and labour, which are as requisite as coals can be to a manufacture.---Besides, what should prevent British adventure from putting an end to all your arguments, by finding coal in Ireland? It is true that in p. 69 you say, she has it not; but in p. 88, you acknowledge that "Coal exists in Ireland; which we have never looked for effectually, but for which necessity may compel us to search." It may be the mere want of capital which has hitherto prevented a successful search;---and the numerous other advantages which this country offers, might very probably cause its being employed* (by working our collieries,) to remove the only impediment which you suggest, to the establishment of manufactures.

"England" (you say) "finds a full call for all she makes: every year affords an encreasing demand."*---What follows? a temptation to vest more capital in business: a temptation, which would immediately operate to send such manufactures to tranquilized and united Ireland, as her situation gave opportunity for establishing to advantage; and which, as by the Union the empire waxed more strong and prosperous, would operate still more powerfully in favour of this country; both by encouraging enterprise, and by rendering Britain too small a sphere, for its overgrown capital to move and act in.

The (constructive) bounty to the Irish manufacturer, of forty shillings on every ton of imported iron, has not brought capital into Ireland.†---Is your inference that Union may not introduce it?---I, for my part, can conceive that conspiracy defeated—
property

* P. 70.

† P. 69.

property secured---the connexion strengthened---the people conciliated---the country tranquilized---the enemy baffled in all attempts at separation---might operate more effectually to bring capital into Ireland, than even a bounty of forty shillings a ton on imported iron. Then, indeed, this bounty might have its additional (though comparatively puny) effect; and tend to induce the settlement of a manufacture here.---But after Union "this bounty will be extinguished:"* Not abruptly; or to the discouragement of trade. The system of protecting duties, according to the best commercial authorities, is founded on an erroneous principle; but it will not follow that what it was injudicious to establish, it will therefore be wise too suddenly to demolish; and therefore you very truly state that the articles of Union merely propose a *possible period* at which those duties are to cease.†---Dismiss your fears---that "Individuals will look to winding up their business, in order to withdraw their capital against that period."‡---They will be content to have trade nursed as long as it continues weak; and will not prepare to withdraw their capital from a manufacture, because it is likely soon to throw away its staff, and cease to lean on the protection which it has ceased to want. ---"We import iron at 12s. 6d.: Britain imports it at nearly 3l.; and such import duty on this raw material, is fitted to our infant state."§ If you be warranted in this last assertion, which I do not mean to controvert, I must, however, on that very account, dissent from what you add; and deny that "every man concerned in the iron manufacture here, must expect the United Parliament will put these duties on a level."|| If the Imperial Parliament have (as it may have) a discretion on this point,—the presumption is, that it will so regulate, between Britain and Ireland, the import duties on the raw materials of manufacture, as to proportion them to the maturity or infancy of these states. Even suppose finance to be the object of the Minister, yet to make Ireland productive, he must make it affluent; to make the empire thrive and flourish in all its parts, he must promote the prosperity

* P. 69.

† P. 92.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

|| Ibid.

prosperity of its Irish limb; and consequently he will adopt measures, that shall foster our manufactures, and encourage loose capital to fix itself amongst us.

The same reasoning will apply to what you say, with respect to farmers. "These," you observe, "must look with uncertainty to the continuance of the corn bounties; and expect that the principles, on which those bounties have been discontinued from one part of Ireland to another, and from the whole of it to Dublin, will be extended, on a similar reasoning, by the United Parliament, to the whole of the united Empire."* You, Sir, I recollect, supported the discontinuance of those corn bounties: I must presume that you suffered them to remain, until the farmer had ceased to require this encouragement; nor do I suppose, that an united Parliament would extend the like discontinuance to the whole of the united Empire, until agriculture, grown more vigorous, no longer wanted such support.

Much of what you urge, appears to me to be objectionable in one of the following points of view: it either merely goes to shew what the terms of Union should provide; or what ought to be the future conduct of the Imperial Legislature; (and therefore would be fit matter to offer to the united Parliament, or to our's, when the terms of Union were discussing;)—or, secondly, your arguments rest on the sophistical assumption, that the situation of the countries, when united, will remain the same which it is, while they are distinct:—and thus you debate the question upon false premises, and upon a supposition of circumstances, which will not then exist.

Of the first description, are your reasonings in page 93, and 110. The first of which might have great weight with the united Parliament, or with the Commissioners, whose province it was to arrange the terms,—to shew to them, that different systems of taxation should be pursued here, and in Great Britain; and the second might, in the same place, be equally efficacious,

cious, to prove that some special measures should be adopted, towards securing the purity of our elections of members to the Imperial Parliament. Of the second description is what you urge in page 70; where, because the English trader has now the Irish market at his door, you conclude, he will after Union continue to possess it; and found, on this hypothesis, an argument against the measure. ¶

Your premises in page 72, I better understand, than what is the conclusion, which you would deduce from them. You state the export of woollen cloth from Ireland to have diminished so considerably within this century, that in the last year it amounted to little more than one-tenth of what it had been in 1698. This merely proves that, of which we were not ignorant, and which seems not very much to the purpose, that the line of Irish trade has changed. Linen has, in the interval, become our staple, and its export, as you inform us,* was in 1796---eighty-eight times greater as to quantity, and one hundred and thirty-seven times greater as to value, than it had been in 1700.

But how does this prove that Union might not bring over British capital, to establish the woollen manufacture? You say† we put down our woollen trade to oblige England. If so, with the assistance of her capital, we may take it up again, without fear of displeasing a country from which we shall have ceased to be distinct: whose jealousies, by Union, we shall have swept away; and whose interests we shall have identified with our own. And here permit me to confess a difficulty, which I have in reconciling your assertion,‡ that the woollen manufacture cannot travel into Ireland,---with your statement, that the value of our woollen export was 110,000l. a hundred years ago;§---and that even under the disadvantages of our present dearth of capital, woollen and cotton manufactures have been established successfully near Cork.¶

Suppose,

¶ I am not overlooking this, that, by Union, the market of each country will be opened to the other: I mean only to say that when trade is advanced in this country, the Irish consumer may be supplied at home.

* P. 105. † P. 83. ‡ P. 69, 72. § P. 83. ¶ P. 97.

Suppose, however, that this should not be so:---that the great encrease of agriculture, and of the linen manufacture, giving a greater profit in land than sheep afford,* the consequence should be, that the British Settlers would not turn their capital to the woollen trade; but would engage in tillage, or the linen trade, or fatten pork for the provision trade, (as you say they have begun to do in England;†) or enter upon any other commerce, more congenial to the circumstances, or habits of this country. What difference would this make? the object is that capital should be introduced into Ireland: not that it should be employed in this or that particular way. Capital (next to tranquillity) is the great commercial want of this country; and capital, by introducing expensive machinery, would remove that obstacle to the establishment of the cotton trade here, which you state the great use of machinery in that manufacture to produce.‡—As to the ineffectual operation of Arkwright's patent as a bounty, I have already remarked, with respect to the constructive bounty on imported iron, that the disturbed state of Ireland, and precariousness of its connexion, (as well as those habits of distinctness, which discouraged the indiscriminate dissemination of capital through the entire Empire,) supplied dissuatives, more than sufficient to counter-vail the effect of these light pecuniary inducements: and if Arkwright's patent has expired in England,---yet let Union repeal the patent of Irish jacobinism and sedition,—and I defy the effects of the ceasing of this bounty. In 1785, the English cotton manufacturers “were under great anxiety and uneasiness, lest the Irish,” (in consequence of an arrangement which partially and inadequately achieved the commercial effects of Union,) “should draw over all their workmen, all their trade, and all their capitals; and be able to undersell them in their own markets, by at least 13l. per cent.”§ It is probable that these apprehensions were exorbitant: but it is also likely that they were not altogether destitute of foundation:—and how strangely do they contrast with your exclamations, against the absurdity of supposing that the cotton manufacture might, after Union, be established here!

As

* P. 72.

† P. 99.

‡ P. 73.

§ P. 74.

As to linen, you admit it to be "an article, which, if British capital could be induced over, would very obviously invite it."*—But could not British capital be induced to settle here? you answer no; because scarcely any has settled amongst us yet.—This indeed is a reason for despairing that, so long as Ireland remains in *statu quo*, English wealth will overflow its banks for her enrichment: but it would be tedious to repeat what I have already stated,—the very adequate preventives to the importation of British Capital,—which our distinctness furnished, and which our Union must remove: it would be tiresome and superfluous to insist upon the impossibility of shewing any sufficient cause, (for its scarcity will not be urged,) which, after Union, could restrain British Capital from pouring into Ireland.

But it is mere parade, you think, to tell us that, in consequence of this measure, we shall participate fully in the wealth and commerce of Great Britain. We are already as free to trade to all the world as she is.† Yes:—on our *no* capital, and our *no* industry, we are at liberty to trade with all the world; and keeping civil and religious discord for our home consumption, may export our traitors to Fort St. George, and deal in recruits with Prussia.

"What port in the known world can a British ship go to from Britain, that an Irish ship cannot go with the same cargo from Ireland? What article can a British ship import into Britain or Ireland, that an Irish ship cannot import equally into Ireland or Britain? What manufacture can Britain establish or encourage, which Ireland is not equally free to do? If new sources of trade shall be opened by conquest or by treaty, do they not belong equally, and at the same instant, to Ireland?"‡ I have adopted literally your own expressions; and now would ask you, if your list of questions be not a list of reasons, Why, after Union, British capital should be vested here? more especially if this country be, by nature, advantageously situated for trade, (and that it is so, eminently,

* P. 73.

† P. 77.

‡ Ibid.

eminently, will not be denied,)—if the rate of labour and price of provisions be lower here than they are in England,—and if British capital be grown too bulky for the present limits of its exertion.

In page 79, you proceed to shew that our commercial intercourse with England is in a higher degree beneficial to that country, than to us. The evidence which you adduce of this, does not thoroughly bear you out:—for the statement, which you take from the Custom-house books, leaves a balance against Britain; and as “the Custom-house value” (you say*) “serves every purpose of proportion or comparison,” it seems as if you might have abided by it on this question of *comparison*: more particularly as it is the proof to which (p. 90.) you have resorted, to shew how good a customer this island is to Britain. To me, however, this adjustment of benefits seems so little pertinent to the present enquiry,—and I am so persuaded that the countries are mutually of incalculable value to each other,—that I shall not enter farther into the discussion.

I might perhaps, upon the same ground, decline reviewing your enquiry whether our linen trade depends on the British Parliament;† but yet must be permitted to attend you, shortly, through this part of your investigation.

At first, (seemingly admitting that we are indebted to Britain for this manufacture,) you say that she is bound by compact to encourage our linen trade. I am sure she is bound by interest to encourage this, and every other Irish fabrick; and I believe she sees what is her true interest in this respect:—but what was the nature of this compact, or when or where it was entered into, you have not informed us; and I, for my part, do not know.

The British measures which protect our linen trade, are, first their duties on the foreign linens; and secondly, their bounty on the export of Irish linens. Does not the continuance of these measures depend on the British Parliament? How then
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* P. 90.

† P. 8.

can it be denied that our linen trade is fostered by their protection? But neither duties nor bounties were given for us! To enquire scrupulously into this would, I think, be very childish. Facts and consequences are obvious; but motives are more abstruse; and here the question is more as to the utility of the grant, than the generosity of the grantor. Now as to the value of a concession, affecting that linen, which, according to Mr. Pitt, constitutes four-fifths, and according to you, about one half,* of our exports to all the world, no reasonable doubt can be entertained; and as to what you state, p. 85, in disparagement of British kindness, it seems to me to prove no more than this, that while she was encouraging our linen manufacture, she also tried to serve her own carrying trade.

I beg to decline following you in your enquiries into the respective powers of Britain and Ireland, to hurt each other by a war of duties and prohibitions. You avow yourself that it is an unpleasant discussion; and I admit, that so long as the two countries remain *distinct*, they have the power of interchanging injuries so material, that it is not worth enquiring which could do most mischief to the other; but would be better to deprive both of their noxious powers, and preclude all wars of duties and prohibitions, by *an Union*.

But Union, by encreasing the number of absentees, would injure the trade and manufactures of Ireland! § Prove this to the British Minister, and I will answer for his abandoning the measure. But if it does not “take a great portion of the “men of property to England,” and replaces those it takes, by an useful description of persons, the ground of your apprehension about our trade will be removed: “No absentee” (you say) “can expect to be elected a member of the United “Parliament; and every member must be a man of considerable property.”†—Is not the necessary inference from your own statements this,—that if a seat in the United Parliament shall be, as it must be, an object of ambition,—an inducement will be held out to men of considerable property to
reside

* P. 86. § P. 91. † Ibid.

reside in Ireland?—Let me briefly add upon this subject, that Union has not hurt the trade or manufactures of Scotland. You quote,† with considerable triumph, the language of the British Minister. He has most frankly and liberally said that, until lately, the system of Britain to this country “had been harsh, and unjust; *and as impolitick as it was oppressive.*”—Will Britain renew the conduct from which she had departed, and which her government has so described? Will any Minister, though he was no partial friend to Ireland, resume a policy which Lord Grenville has acknowledged to have been “*absurd, as well as barbarous;*” and which “however it might have contributed” (says Mr. Pitt) “to the partial benefit of districts in Britain, *promoted not the real strength of the Empire?*”—Thus does not the policy which Britain has fully recognised,—or, if any man prefers a more jealous and invidious epithet,—does not British selfishness afford a guaranty for British kindness?—and need we fear an Union, with an adequate Irish Representation?—Why call our hundred Representatives a mockery?‡ Would their voices be more feeble than those of the Yorkshire members? Would their sentiments be less attended to? Would their local knowledge be more neglected? Why idly contrast the Irish with the British members,—when they are the indiscriminate representatives of a cemented Empire?—When the prosperity of Ireland is the aggrandizement of that Britain, over whose interests you suppose the 558 will so closely watch?—May not an Irish member share in, or even guide the councils of the Empire? I shall not dwell on such a man’s predilection for his country, for his duty undoubtedly would be impartially to consult the interests of the whole United State; but at least Ireland would not suffer under such an administration.

But admitting that articles might be devised to secure the Irish trade and purse,|| (against those whose interest it is to protect both,) in the alledged omnipotence of Parliament you discern

discern a power, to defeat or mutilate this compact. Excuse me, if I say, that such reasoning is unworthy of you. It soars *inter apices juris*, in order to perch on a supposition, subversive in its consequences, and refuted by experience. “The Imperial Legislature” (as I have on a former occasion stated,) “may be competent to disfranchise Wales, or Yorkshire, or “to violate the terms on which the Sister Countries shall have “been united; but I see no moral possibility of their applying “their transcendant authority to such a purpose.” * If by a maxim of the constitution, the King can do no wrong, still less can that Legislature, of which he but constitutes a part; and if we are to ramble into the boundless regions of abstract possibility, I will reply, that substantially to violate the articles of the Union, would be to subvert the Imperial Constitution, and be one of those extreme and not supposable cases, which might absolve the Irish subject from his allegiance, and justify an appeal from the Legislature to the sword.

But we are to look to Scotland, † in vindication of your fears. —I imagine myself to have been one of the first, to whose lot it fell to expose the absurdity of alledging the Malt Tax, as an infringement of the Scotch treaty of Union. The task was free from difficulty; and was performed by a short quotation from the histories of that period. ‡ But the violation on which you choose to rely, is not the tax on malt, but upon income. In urging this objection, you desert the spirit, in order to fasten on the letter of the treaty. I answer it by observing shortly, 1st, that all taxes must ultimately affect income of every kind; and therefore, if your reasoning were well-founded, there would be but one way of avoiding a violation of the Scottish Union, viz. by abstaining from taxing Scotland altogether: 2dly, the very spirit and object of that provision in the treaty, which you notice,—the very end which the Scotch nation must have proposed to itself in inserting it, was that which is accomplished by the Income Tax; namely, the taxing Scotland in proportion to its means, and striking between the contribution of the two countries, the same ratio that

* An Address to the People of Ireland.

† P. 96.

‡ Address, p. 91.

that there was between their wealth and income. 3dly, the recent exigencies of that united kingdom, of which North Britain is an integral part, imperiously demanded of the Scots, as they tendered their existence, to contribute to its preservation.

I shall not follow you in your examination of the effects of Union upon Cork. That quarter of the kingdom is probably best acquainted with its own interests; and entertains an opinion different from yours. I shall content myself by answering the question, and the remarks, which you apply to this part of the discussion.

You ask "what could induce the establishment of a dock-yard, after a Union, more than before?"*—The abolition of all fears and jealousies, that were the creatures of our distinctness: the abrogation of all maxims of suspicious policy: the intimate blending and identification of the two countries: the taking away from Britain every question upon the subject of where she should establish a dock-yard,—except the single one of--which was the best naval station?

In order to console Cork, however, for the disappointment which you predict, you remark that no trade exists where great dock-yards are established.—I do not, for my part, know how the fact may be; but supposing it to be as you state it, I presume other adequate causes could be assigned for that want of trade, which I am unable to see how the establishment of a dock-yard should produce.

But we should not address ourselves to Cork; we should speak to Ireland. You do so, when you ask, if we "want to be better than well?"† I protest if we be well, the symptoms of our political health are very strange ones. I speak not of that late rebellion, which you may tell me was but a crisis, that has operated to throw off impurities, and restore the vigour of our constitution. I speak of those military escorts which attend our judges round their circuits, to protect them

* P. 98.

† P. 100.

them from the rude and ramping health of our people : I speak of the number of troops which have come from England, to bear witness to the political sanity of Ireland : I speak of that regimen of martial law, which the Legislature has just prescribed, to check the imprudent frolics of an over-vigorous people, and prevent their health from becoming too plethorick. I could enumerate other symptoms, but should tire my Reader, and myself ; and therefore shall conclude, by doubting whether the physic which you are for rejecting, be quite so unnecessary as you think it.

In page 100, (as I follow in your winding course) I find you recurring to the example of Scotland, and denying all similarity between our situation and hers.

Scotland, you tell us,* “ by the junction of the crowns, “ became subject to English influence, in all her national “ concerns :” their Darien settlement was destroyed by the jealous interference of England :† Scotch feelings were continually hurt, by the harassing proceedings of their “ powerful and jealous rival,” who depressed their country in “ her “ trade, and in every thing of value in her state ;”‡ and upon all these grounds, you conclude that Scotland had reason to accept an Union ; and to expect in it, a remedy for the grievances above mentioned.

From Great Britain’s “ partial conduct against this country,”§—from her having, “ for forty years, harassed our “ victualing trade, by embargoes,”|| and from the oppressive and jealous tenor of her entire conduct, you conclude that an Union must injure Ireland.

Are the above arguments consistent? or, by which of them will you abide? If your premises were admitted, your first

* P. 100.

† P. 101.

‡ Ibid.

§ P. 93.

|| P. 97.

first reasoning would be the justest; and would extend, to prove the utility of Union to this country.

But, in pointing out the dissimilarity of our situation to that of Scotland, you observe that she was connected with England, only by the *accidental* circumstance of the English Crown having descended upon her Monarch.* On this, allow me to observe, that as high-sounding phrases will not strengthen, neither can disparaging epithets diminish, the firmness of that connexion, by which two countries are held together. That connexion, which by styling it accidental, you imply to have been precarious, and unlikely to endure,—depended on a no less strong support, than those rules and maxims of hereditary descent, which in England and Scotland were the same, and which have lasted to the present day: and, if the Abdication of James II. and consequent Revolution, Act of Settlement, &c. had not operated on the British system a change as rare and violent, as it was useful,—(a change, against which, if they had happened to encounter, our sealing-wax and parchment would have made as ineffectual a stand, as the venerable rules of hereditary right,) I say, if this extraordinary change had not taken place, that Union of the English and Scottish Crowns, which had happened on the demise of Elizabeth, would have continued as long as there were heirs of the House of Stuart. And thus much for the durability of the Scotch and English connexion, (in the junction of their Crowns;) as contrasted with that which holds these countries together; accompanied with all its appendages—of Great Seal, Annexation Act, &c.

You deny that Scotland had a Constitution *like* Britain: § I might have controverted your position, though you had but denied her to have had substantially the same.—When a man asserts that an establishment, consisting of three estates,—a representative body, (particularly organized, but still representing the same class in the state, as our Commons do,) a chamber

* Page 100.

§ Page 101.

chamber of hereditary nobility, graduated analogously to those of England, and holding their titles by like grants, and with similar limitations,—an hereditary King, the chief Executive Magistrate, and possessing a right of negative on the proceedings of the Legislature,—that this establishment is not like the British Constitution:—I cannot argue with such a man; I can only express my surprise. The arrangement of 1706, however, has practically and successfully disputed your opinion; and by blending the Scottish Lords and Commons with the English, has recorded them to have been respectively homogeneous classes.

“We,” however, “are not only united to the Crown, but to the Empire: our friends, our enemies the same; and our interests, as well as laws, binding us in that Union.” *

Why then, in the name of Heaven, if a single flaw can be discovered—on which to fix a doubt of the permanence of our connexion,—should we shrink from consolidating it, by the most intimate incorporation?—We should thereby lose our free Constitution! I deny it. Prove to me that we shall; and I will vote against an Union. Meantime, you must allow me here to cite a passage from your Speech;‡ accompanying it with some qualifying parentheses of my own.

“In preserving” (*the dissimilarity of*) “this Constitution, we retain all the means of trade;” (*except capital, industry, internal quiet, and that stability of connexion, which may attract the capital of Britain:*) “whereas, if we sacrifice it,” (*by blending our distinct establishment, with a system analogous in theory, and better administered in practice,*) “wealth will vanish, when freedom is banished,” (*by our obtaining those protections which secure it to Great Britain.*) We have more to lose than mere “wealth, or trade: we have to lose sound genuine liberty;” (*by participating in all the privileges of the British Constitution.*)

In

In page 104, waving those arguments which you had founded on the alledged difference of our present situation, from that of Scotland at the period of the Union, you (for a moment) admit their similarity; but contend “that every argument drawn from the arrangement of 1706, strongly urges us against a similar experiment.”

You doubt whether the encreasing prosperity of Scotland, since the Union, is properly attributable to that event. It is difficult to prove the affirmative or negative of such a question; and besides, requires evidence, which neither you nor I possess. A comparison of the rates of Scottish progress, for fifty years before, and fifty years following the Union, would prove something. If that progress appeared infinitely accelerated in the latter period, it might seem presumable that that event had contributed to advance it; and this presumption would become still more violent, if it appeared, on investigation, that the interval between Scotch and English prosperity, had been greater before the Union, than it was since. For, that “progressive state of the world, for the last century,”† to which, rather than to this measure, you impute the prosperity of Scotland, would have operated in equal degree upon both countries; and therefore, the decrease of disparity between their greatness, would be fairly enough imputable to the Union. That arrangement would appear to have removed impediments to Scotch improvement; and by giving it the full use of whatever advantages it had from nature, to have enabled it to participate duly in the progress of the world.

“But has Scotland advanced in prosperity, since the Union, as much as Ireland?”* I presume not. Spite of whatever mischiefs were produced by Irish distinctness,—I presume not. This admission I concede not to your proof; but to my own conviction. Your demonstration is inadequate, and sophistical. You measure the relative progress of the two countries,

† Page 104.

* Ibid.

countries, by mere comparison of the advancement of their linen manufacture; without ascertaining whether this has so predominated in Scotland, as with us: whether it has been equally the staple of both countries.

But I presume, the advancement of Ireland has been more considerable. I do not conceive Union to be a measure of sufficient efficacy, to efface the distinctions of natural advantage, and prevent the prosperity of a country from bearing some proportion to these. It is enough, if it removes all political obstacles to a country's greatness; and thus renders it more prosperous, than disunited it could have been. Ireland may be blessed with natural capacities, which have so far outweighed her political disadvantages, as, after all, to let her outstrip the prosperity of Scotland. But if united, I am satisfied she will leave her still more behind; and reap, at length, the full benefits of her soil and situation.

On the question, however, whence Scotch prosperity has arisen, I am content that we should make a compromise, if you think proper. I will abate somewhat of my certainty, that it has been produced by the Scottish Union, if you, on your part, will not so inexorably refer to the settlement of 1782, every advance which has been made by Ireland, since that period. || Suppose, that in fourteen years from 1782, Irish exports rose as much, as they had done in eighty years before: we know, that in the case of individuals, and of nations, improvement does not proceed regularly, but *par secusses*: we know that the recent acceleration, of which you boast, may have arisen, not from the arrangements of 1782, but from that free trade of 1780, which an Union, instead of cramping, would practically promote: we *do not* know but a comparison in the case of Scotland, would furnish the same difference between her rates of progress, since, and previous to, 1782: We *do* know, that latterly, the advances of England have been incomparably more rapid, than they were before,

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and that she may have hurried us along, as an Imperial Relative, in those strides. At all events you know (for you have stated) that "the argument is shallow, which attributes every increase of trade in Scotland, from that day to this, to the Union;"* and the argument which is shallow, as to Scotland, cannot, as to Ireland, be more profound; nor can the settlement of 1782 be entitled to a privilege, which you deny to the arrangement of 1706.

"The question between England and Scotland," (you say) "was Union, or Separation?"† I doubt whether, in the present case, the question be widely different; and found my doubts on events too melancholy, and too notorious, for enumeration: I might find them on the mere reports of our Secret Committees; and they would stand. But the proposed Union "leads to Separation."‡ Prove this to its supporters, and I will answer for their conversion. Can you seriously imagine that the Minister, or the Legislature of Great Britain, would propose a measure which "leads to Separation?" What has brought the British Militia into Ireland?---Would the government which sent those to fight, if necessary, for the connexion,---lend its hand to a measure which "leads to Separation?"---Nay, Sir, we should listen with distrust even to *arguments*, which were employed to prove any thing so incredible as this; and so long as you confine yourself to mere paradoxical *assertion*,---spite of your merited weight, we cannot listen to you at all.

You ask, why Mr. Dundas "has not told us the opinion of his countryman, Mr. Adam Smith, on the effects of the Scottish Union?"§---I am sure I cannot tell.---He might, with perfect security, have resorted to his authority; while, for you to quote it, appears rather indiscreet. Adam Smith has explicitly declared it as his opinion that, by an Union with Great Britain, Ireland would obtain not only commercial, but *other more important advantages*: that this measure would dry up

* P. 104. † P. 107. ‡ Ibid. § P. 106.

up a source of discord and oppression ; and that “ without it, “ the inhabitants of this country were not likely, for ages, to “ consider themselves as one people.”* A writer who holds these sentiments with respect to Union, is not exactly the authority, which an Anti-unionist should chuse to cite.

Having, in a Speech which I made in Parliament, in January last, and which has, since that time, appeared in print, discussed the question of Parliamentary Competence pretty fully, I shall, (without meaning to refer my reader to what has been said, or written, by so poor an authority as myself,) yet decline repeating here what I have thus already offered to the Publick ; ---and shall content myself, in answer to what you urge upon this head, with observing briefly---that to dispute the competence of Parliament, is to deny the constitutional existence of the united kingdom of Great Britain, and shake to its foundations his Majesty's (not hereditary) title to his Scottish Crown ; nay may go to impeach the right of the House of Hanover, (under the Act of Settlement) to the Throne of England :--- that it is to contradict the express positions, as well as to subvert the consequential doctrines, of some of the ablest constitutional and legal writers ; including names no less respectable than those of Blackstone, Coke, and Montesquieu ;---and operates to give inevitable admission to a Republican Principle, which will degrade Parliament from its high station, and deck a fierce and unwieldy multitude in the spoils of Legislative Supremacy.

The security of the subject against Parliamentary domination arises, not from the limited authority of the legislative, but from the frame and construction of Parliament itself ; in which the various and conflicting interests of the state are so well poised, as mutually to control the encroachments of each other : and if, spite of these precautions, a weak and wicked Parliament should yet abuse its vast authority,---it might thereby legitimate insurrection, and pull its own power about
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* Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.
Book V. c. 3.

its ears ;---but with that power, would perish the whole fabrick of the Constitution : whilst this endures, the theoretick power of Parliament being unbounded, we are relieved from all preliminary trouble, of enquiring into its right of accomplishing any measure which is before it, and may proceed at once to investigate the merits of the plan itself ;---since, in demonstrating its utility, we shall bring it within the sphere of parliamentary competence to achieve. It is a glorious prerogative of the British Constitution, that there is no political blessing for the people, which lies beyond the reach of their Parliament to obtain.

The grounds I have thus laid, Sir, will furnish a refutation of your hypothesis,* that if the omnipotence of Parliament can consolidate two separate Legislatures, it may equally consolidate the three estates of each ; or take the purse of the nation out of the custody of the Commons.

No, Sir : this consolidation would be no blessing,---but a curse: a manifest subversion of the liberties of the people : such a measure is, on the face of it, so mischievous, and deformed, so repugnant not only to the principles, but to the very existence of our Constitution, that its adoption by Parliament must not, even in the way of hypothesis, be supposed : “ there are points” (as you truly observe) “ where the powers of the Legislature end,---and “ those of the people, at large, begin ;”† and it may be added, that such extreme cases can never furnish illustration :---it may be added, that, under no possible circumstances, could a consolidation of the three estates of the legislature be beneficial. But can it be contended---will you contend,---that under no supposable circumstances, on no devisable terms, could an incorporation of these two parts of the Empire be advantageous ? And would our Parliament be then incompetent to obtain its benefits for the people ?---Must we, as a preliminary step to its attainment, depose Parliament from its supremacy ? and in doing so, dissolve the Government, and annihilate our whole establishment ? You will not contend for so ruinous a doctrine ; and, in abandoning it, will acknowledge Parliament to be competent to enact Union.

I have

* P. 108.

† P. 108.

I have now, Sir, (I hope, consistently with that respect, which is so justly due to you,) gone through your several arguments, *seriatim*; and given them such answers, as my small abilities could supply; but whether or not I have succeeded in refuting you, it is not for me, but for the Publick, to pronounce.

Let me here, while I am hastening to my conclusion, be allowed to introduce one or two observations, though not *directly* in answer to any thing which has fallen from you.

You have more than once contrasted the 100 Irish, with the 558 British representatives. Let us pursue this idea, by examining those contrasts, which the Parliament of this country will internally afford. The members for counties, cities, and commercial towns, will be found to form a small portion of the 300,---compared with those who sit for what we call *close* boroughs. The meaning of this epithet "close" it is not my business to determine; but I believe it is neither untrue, nor unparliamentary, to suggest, that this majority of our House of Commons does not more truly represent the landed and commercial interests of this country, than they are represented by the 64 county, and the city members. Now I have heard it said, and I believe with truth, that if an Union should take place, the system of Irish representation was likely to be modified in this respect,---that the entire number of country members remaining, and the principal commercial towns also returning representatives, the number of those who sit for boroughs would be materially abridged. Indeed it is plain they must be so; if the number of representatives secured to Ireland, by the terms of Union, be a hundred. For when from this sum we deduct 64 county members, and some representatives for cities, and commercial towns, the number remaining for borough members (by an arrangement resembling the Scotch, perhaps,) to make up, will be extremely limited. Thus the Irish portion of the Imperial Parliament would be composed wholly of the genuine representatives of our landed and commercial interests: of men whose own welfare was closely allied to the prosperity of their country. If seats in Parliament were venal,
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the benefit resulting to this country from such an organization, would be the more signal: for this abridgment of the comparative number of boroughs would prevent British money from gaining a seat amongst our Legislators; and would secure us a thoroughly Irish representation.

If this be so,---it seems to me that Union affords the only probable or secure path to those grand popular measures, of which for some years back we have heard so much. It might give Catholick Emancipation; and must produce Parliamentary Reform.

I imitate your example,* in declining those discussions, which regard the state of our religion in this kingdom; both, because I have on a former occasion† published my opinions on this subject, and because I concur with you, in considering it to be a delicate topick. Thus much however, may without impropriety be said;---that this country is not a scene of the most perfect religious concord: that Adam Smith has supposed Union would mitigate religious prejudice; and make the inhabitants of Ireland consider themselves as one people;---a consummation, which must be most devoutly wished, by every friend to the connexion, to the empire, to his country: that the temper and genius of the times are not such, as to render this the properest moment, for upholding an irritating system, with a strong hand: that the situation is arduous and perplexing,-- in which, while it may perhaps be dangerous to grant, it is not liberal, if perfectly safe policy, to withhold: that Union would extricate us from so embarrassing a dilemma,---by making the religion of the people, the religion of the state.

The tendencies of Union in other respects, I have, in the foregoing pages, had occasion to discuss. If these were such as you describe, I should heartily join with you to cry, No Union!‡ but, persuaded as I am, that its tendencies would be to baffle all attempts at separation: that by giving vigour to the Empire, it would give security to Ireland: that it might remove
some

* P. 111.

† From p. 65 to 74, of an Address to the People of Ireland.

‡ P. 107.

some of the risks, and difficulties, which obstruct sound and moderate religious, or political reform: that it would bring an orderly rank of persons in contact with the mass of our people; and fill up, as it were, the chasms of our incoherent community: that it would, by their example, improve the morals of our lower ranks; initiating them in industry, and communicating to them a taste for the decencies of life:---in a word, that it would raise and civilize our barbarous and degraded people; and fit them to enjoy the freedom it conferred: that it would bury, in a complete identification of interest, whatever jealousies may have subsisted between the kingdoms; would assuage that internal discord, of which we have so long been the victims,—and permanently enrich and tranquilize our country:---satisfied as I am, that such would be the effects of Union, I say to my Countrymen “accept the offer; and “adhere to the Constitution of 1782.”*---Preserve the Constitution, which you then acquired: it must be invaluable; for it is that of Britain: but abolish a distinctness, which impedes the practical enjoyment of its blessings; and is at variance with a connexion, on which your happiness depends.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c. &c.

WILLIAM SMITH.

DUBLIN,
April 27th, 1799.

* “Reject the offer; and adhere to the Constitution of 1782.”

Speaker's Speech—p. 107.

THE END.

Thomson (R) Mar 1891
London

R E P O R T

S P E C I E S



BY JOHN LIND, F.R.S.E. & F.R.S.

REGENCY BILL

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R E P O R T

OF TWO

S P E E C H E S.

DELIVERED BY THE

RT. HON. LORD VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH,

IN THE DEBATE ON THE

R E G E N C Y B I L L,

ON APRIL 11th, 1799.

Dublin.

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THURSDAY APRIL 11th, 1799.

REGENCY BILL.

THE Order for the House going into Committee on the Regency Bill being read,

Lord CASTLEREAGH rose. His Lordship said, that when this Bill had been originally proposed by the Right Hon. Member who introduced it, he had declared his intention not to oppose the measure, provided it strictly followed the principle of the Act of Annexation, and if it remedied all the evils, which the principles adopted by the House in 1789 had produced. On the second reading of the Bill he had stated several of the inconveniencies which arose from our present situation, which would not only be continued, but

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increased by any inadequate measure on the subject. He was now obliged to say, that if the bill was to be passed in its present form, the inconveniences and evils which he had enumerated would by no means be obviated, and that he therefore could not accept it as a cure for the evil it was intended to remedy. On arguing the present Bill he thought he should not do himself justice, were he to confine himself strictly within the limits of its provisions: he would therefore advert, not merely to the precise object of the bill before the house, but would resort to the principle from which it flowed; *that* principle was the danger which arose, and must for ever arise, from the possibility of two independent legislatures in the same empire adopting discordant measures on imperial questions. The Right Hon. Gentleman had adverted to one of the effects which resulted from this principle, but had totally neglected the cause; it was his duty rather to apply to the cause, which was the source of numerous inconveniencies, which could alone be cured by its removal. The bill merely took up a single point out of many which flowed from that *cause*; he would not enumerate them all; however they were all points of division and separation. But no man could overlook the danger which resulted from two independent

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pendent legislatures in the great questions of peace, of war, of general trade and commerce, and of treaties with foreign nations, not to mention the difficulties which arose from the admiralty jurisdiction, and the great subject of our religious establishment, which must be regulated on imperial principles. As to the first of these questions, (the question of Peace and War) what was not to be apprehended on the subject, under our state of separate legislatures? How was it possible to conceive that the empire could continue as at present, whilst all parts of it were to receive equal protection, and only one part of it to suffer the burdens of that protection? Must we not, of necessity and in justice, look to some settlement of imperial contribution? And so soon as a system of contribution should be established, was there any question as to peace and war, which would not agitate every part of the country? And should we not be bound to consider with scrupulousness every imperial measure which might lead to the demand of contributions from the people? If the question of peace and war was important at present, how much more interesting would it become then! The subject would assume a new aspect, every circumstance of continental politics must be matter of our solicitude and come within our discussion.

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Why had we not differed from Great Britain in former wars? It was from this circumstance, that Great Britain supported the whole expence, and wars were not in any degree expenfive to Ireland. Wars have recently increased in their expence enormously. Ireland as a separate country, possessing all the advantages of the commerce and all the advantages of the protection of England, will naturally be bound to contribute her just proportion for the continuance of those advantages. When that shall be the case, how can it be expected that she will tamely follow Great Britain with that submission and subserviency which has hitherto marked her conduct? If parliament were to consent to such humiliation, would they carry with them the public confidence? The feelings of the people must always be agitated in proportion to their interests; they would not easily be reconciled to have their contributions called forth to support measures which their representatives did not discuss, nor would they suffer without jealousy questions which affected their dearest interests to be decided in a parliament in which they were not represented. What then is the security for the connexion of the two kingdoms? Is it the discretion of the Irish Parliament? No man had a higher respect than himself for their prudence, their liberality and their loyalty.

loyalty. But had not that discretion already failed in so remarkable an instance, as to prove that it was at best but a bad security? It was against the principle of human nature that one country should voluntarily and regularly follow the dictates of another; it was against the common principles of pride and independence, which must ever grow and increase with the importance of the kingdom. In proportion therefore to our wealth and strength, the principle of discretion would be weakened, and the sole security for the continuance of our connexion would vanish. His Lordship after these general observations reverted to the bill before the house: He said the bill certainly went to enact that the regal power of the two kingdoms should reside in the same person: But how did it secure that end? The Crown had at present an undoubted prerogative of appointing a regency in certain cases; whereas the bill, as it was framed, entirely destroyed that prerogative. The bill was also so drawn, that if it passed in its present form, the regent of Great Britain could not appoint a Lord Lieutenant, for the regent, would be merely a deputy, and no deputy could appoint a deputy. If such was the objection to the frame, there were greater objections to the substance, of the bill. If it were
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complete as to the *person* who should be regent ; it did not define his *power*, which might be of equal consequence. The competency and propriety of parliament limiting the powers of the regent had been fully established in the British parliament. But how was that principle applied in the bill ? The proviso enacted that the regent of Ireland should be subject to the same restrictions as the regent of England. Here the right hon. gentleman gave up the supremacy of the Irish legislature, and transferred to the parliament of England the right of imposing restrictions on the regent of Ireland, but he gave up this right in the most absurd manner imaginable. He gives the parliament of Great Britain a right to form restrictions for our regent, but does not allow them to consider the applicability of those restrictions ; he makes the restrictions imposed on the regent of Great Britain attach, right or wrong, on the regent of Ireland ; and forgetting that what is expedient in one country may be inexpedient in another, he makes the same regulations fortuitously attach to different governments, differently constituted and differently circumstanced. Certainly the question of restrictions cannot be avoided ; but by whom are they to be imposed ? There were only three methods ; first by the parliament of Great Britain ; second by the parliament of Ireland ; third, by treaty.

ty. If the last were to be resorted to, he feared the effort would be vain and futile; and as in the case of the commercial propositions, the question of policy would be sacrificed to the difficulty of settling the question of authority. If the power were to be given to the parliament of Great Britain, he then fully admitted that such a provision would meet the difficulties of the case, but this could not be accomplished without a surrender of the supremacy of the Irish Parliament. But if the restrictions were to be imposed by the Irish parliament, in that case nothing was done, the question would be still afloat, would be open to every possible cavil, and subject as much as ever to the influence of faction and cabal. His Lordship proceeded to say, that our connexion with England chiefly depended on the prerogatives of the crown of both kingdoms being exercised under the controul of one imperial cabinet. He would then suppose a case, which was easy to be imagined and natural to occur, that the English parliament should delegate the royal authority to a person of whose principles and councils the Irish parliament was jealous. Ireland would be bound to adopt this individual as their regent. Although the nomination of the person was by this bill placed out of their power, the right of restraining his authority would be in their power. How would the Irish parliament naturally proceed
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to restrain him? might they not require that his prerogatives should be exercised by the advice and under the controul of an Irish council responsible to the Irish parliament alone? A Lord Lieutenant is now controuled by the British crown, and the British cabinet; he would be then controuled by an Irish cabinet; and instead of one general executive for the whole empire, we should have two executives, as well as two legislatures; and be subjected to the effects which must unavoidably result from distinct governments. His lordship then argued, that the only mode of settling the question was by distinctly surrendering to the British parliament the whole authority on this point. And if the right hon. gentleman was prepared to follow up the Act of Annexation, and to enact, that the power which created the crown of Ireland and limited its succession, should be competent to regulate the question of regency in all cases, he would then set the question at rest; if he stopped short of *that*, he would be doing nothing. His lordship asked, whence did the difficulty on this and similar questions arise? Was it not from the final settlement, as it was called, of 1782? Antecedent to that period, the parliament of this kingdom was in the habit of submitting to the parliament of another country, and *that* parliament was allowed a general superintendence

intendence in all cases of imperial legislation. Since that period, the parliament of Ireland would not suffer any other authority to interfere in the concerns of this kingdom, and hence all the inconveniences and dangers had arisen which he had stated. He was however surprised, that any man should call the measure of 1782 a final adjustment between the countries, which went but to one principle, and set afloat every other. He called the house to look at the weakness of the measure itself, which from every subsequent event to the present day, had shewn itself to be entirely inadequate to adjust the questions which disturbed the empire; he called on the house to look to the resolutions of the British parliament, which declared *that* settlement not to be final; and he called on them to advert to the expressions of those ministers who had framed that settlement. His lordship here stated Mr. Fox's sentiments from his speech on the commercial propositions in 1785, as follows:

“ JULY 22, 1785. ”

“ Mr. Fox, (speaking of the settlement of 1782,) ”
 “ declared, that no idea of a commercial regulation ”
 “ had been entertained by administration of that day, ”
 “ in proposing that resolution. There were, he said, ”
 “ at that time certainly some regulations wanting be-

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“tween the two countries, but those regulations
 “were to extend to political objects alone, and not to
 “commercial; they went partly to establish what
 “was much wanted, something to replace that
 “power, which, in their struggles for independence,
 “the Irish had imprudently insisted on having abo-
 “lished; and which he had himself given up, in
 “compliance with the strong current of the preju-
 “dices of that nation, though with a reluctance
 “that nothing but irresistible necessity could have
 “overcome. The power which he wished to have
 “seen replaced, was that which had been so often
 “of late under discussion in parliament, and which
 “had been variously termed, being sometimes
 “called commercial, at other times external, and
 “frequently imperial legislation, that power being
 “precipitately abolished, that some succedaneum
 “should be found for it; for without one general
 “and superintending authority to embrace and
 “comprehend the whole system of the navigation of
 “the empire, it must necessarily happen that much
 “confusion and great inconvenience would take
 “place.”

“When he had said, that he had regretted hav-
 “ing given it the power of external legislation, as
 “likely

“likely to prejudice the general interests of the em-
 “pire, and therefore necessary to be replaced, he
 “desired not to be understood as meaning to seek for
 “it again ; what he meant was, to find some system,
 “that without reclaiming the power, or infringing
 “in the smallest degree on the full emancipation and
 “independence formally conceded to Ireland,
 “should afford the means of avoiding that confu-
 “sion which was otherwise so much to be
 “dreaded.”

His Lordship said he did not argue from these
 words however strong and impressive, that Mr.
 Fox had a legislative union in contemplation in
 1782, but he evidently wanted some permanent
 principle of connexion as a substitute for what he
 had surrendered. Mr. Fox was probably not able at
 that period to look a legislative union in the face ;
 he was obliged to go in search of some measure
 of corresponding force, if it could be found, but
 he searched in vain. It was ridiculous to consider
 the settlement of 1782 as final, because it was so
 stated in the Address of the time ; we must judge
 of a measure from its spirit, not from its words ;
 from its principles and effects, not from the lan-
 guage in which it may be cloathed ; and from the

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known and declared intention of its framers, not from the mere phrase in which it may happen to be expressed. His Lordship then concluded that there was no alternative but to remain subject to the present evil, or to embrace the whole remedy. Let not gentlemen flatter themselves that by applying half-measures the danger of separation could be cured; the principles of the bill of annexation might bear us out in surrendering our legislative independence to Great Britain in the case of a Regency; but the spirit of the country would not bear it in others. Such a conduct was full of delicacy, and it was big with danger; it involved the principle of intrusting power without representation, a principle which had produced the loss of America, and was incompatible with the British Constitution. He would therefore acquiesce in the Right Hon. Gentleman's bill, if made adequate and effectual; but he should be criminal if he were to blindfold the people on the subject, by submitting to half-measures; and as in the whole it was but a feeble attempt to cure a general evil by a partial remedy, he did not think it his duty to make himself responsible for its effects, although he might not oppose it. If it should be made adequate to its object

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in the committee, he would not afterwards resist it ; if it should remain inadequate, he would not disgrace himself by supporting it.

The Right Honourable the Speaker having in the Committee delivered the Speech, which has been since published,

Lord CASTLEREAGH rose in reply. His Lordship said, that he had been highly gratified by the opportunity which had been offered to the Right Hon. Gentleman to state at large his sentiments upon the question of UNION; that he had no doubt if an opportunity had presented itself, he would have availed himself of his privilege at an earlier period; and certainly the Right Hon. Gentleman, in entering so much at large into the subject, had merely done credit to himself, to the situation which he filled, and the opposition which he had professed. He felt the utmost diffidence in replying to the speech of the Right Hon. Gentleman, as he fully acknowledged the great superiority of his experience and abilities; and he lamented that it

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was impossible for him to enter into all the numerous topicks and details, which his power of condensation had enabled him to compress together. He should be happy, however, could he at any time be enabled to consider and meet them article by article: for he felt that every thing which he had advanced was so capable of refutation, that the result of what he heard was to impress upon his mind more strongly than ever, that the existence of this country depended upon a Legislative Union with Great Britain. He would first advert to the insinuation made by the Speaker, that he had declared that private opinions were more to be relied upon than records of Parliament. This was not his argument; he had stated that parliamentary documents were to be explained according to their spirit, tendency and effect, more than according to their words; and that the best testimony, as to the intent and meaning of a measure, was the declaration of the Ministers who framed it. It was on this principle he had quoted the speech of Mr. Fox. The Speaker could not pretend to insinuate that Mr. Fox was not Minister in 1782, much less could he insinuate that he did not know his own intentions at that period. As to the settlement of 1782, so much contended to be final, he had stated it himself to be so, as to the points of grievance then brought

brought forward ;—It was undoubtedly final, as to the subserviency of the Irish to the British Legislature ; but as to all other questions of intercourse, of policy, of reciprocal benefit and advantage between the two kingdoms it could not be final ; it was not so in its nature, it had been proved not to be so from its consequences, and it was the height of absurdity to argue that it was. Does the Right Hon. Gentleman think that the two separate legislatures can keep the countries connected by the mere principle of their independency ; or that in itself and in its nature the principle of independency is a measure of connexion ? No, Sir, the two kingdoms are at present kept together by the feelings of the people, and not by the adjustment of 1782, which is totally inadequate. But the Right Hon. Gentleman relies on the great Seal of England.—Will the great Seal keep down the jealousy of the people of Ireland ? Will the great Seal destroy French principles ? Will the great Seal destroy that separation and distinctness of interests upon which the enemies of the empire erect their hopes of dividing the islands ? But it was said this settlement of 1782 had kept the country in peace until its tranquillity was disturbed by Mr. Pitt's rashness in introducing the question of an Union. He appealed to the House if that was a fair and candid

did statement of the case?—was that a statement which became the Right Hon. Gentleman? He wished not to exaggerate the distresses of the country: he wished not to expatiate on the distractions by which she was convulsed; it was not a state of peace, it was not a state of tranquillity which Mr. Pitt had endeavoured to disturb, but it was the state of our miseries and distractions to which Mr. Pitt was ready to sacrifice his own peace, in the hope of finding a remedy. But when the Right Hon. Gentleman accuses Mr. Pitt's rashness as the cause of the disturbances of Ireland, what was his own conduct? Was that calculated to allay the heats, and cool the animosities of the country? or did not he and his friends exert themselves in inflaming the minds of the people? When the question of Union was first mentioned, did not he use all his influence to prevent its being discussed at all, as a question not to be admitted? and when the Government consented not to press the subject, but to leave it till the temper of Parliament should change, did not he and his friends press for immediate discussion, in order to keep up the flame they had created? The Right Hon. Gentleman had complained of the language used in another house by Mr. Pitt, and of his own speech being garbled by order of Government; what was the truth on the latter point?

point? So soon as Mr. Pitt's speech was supposed to have arrived, there was a natural curiosity in the public to read it; he therefore had sent a friend with the first copy he had received to a printer, to which copy a curtailed report of the Speaker's speech in 1785 was annexed. As soon as he heard that this speech was not a just statement, he desired *that* statement to be substituted, which the Speaker himself should approve; and it was done accordingly. As to Mr. Pitt's taking advantage of the Speaker's opinion in 1785, was it not acknowledged that the opinions of great men on great subjects, when truly quoted, have great weight and may be fairly adduced? and was there one point in which Mr. Pitt had misrepresented him? But if this conduct was not candid in Mr. Pitt, did not the Speaker himself commence the attack?—What were the insinuations in his answer to the freeholders of Louth? Did he not state that the settlement in 1782 was a final settlement on all constitutional questions, and did he not then insinuate that Mr. Pitt in proposing an Union was breaking that settlement, was infringing a compact, and violating the faith of Great Britain, solemnly pledged to Ireland? and would not Mr. Pitt have been deficient in his duty to himself and the public, if he had not vindicated his conduct from so foul an aspersions? and had not Mr. Pitt a

right to defend himself if possible by the authority of his accuser, and to resent the accusation? Did Mr. Pitt in his defence quote the Right Hon. Gentleman untruly, or did he make any uncandid inference from his speeches? He quoted the Right Hon. Gentleman to have said, " Things cannot remain as they are, commercial jealousy is roused, it will increase with two independent legislatures, and without one united interest in commerce in a commercial empire, political Union will receive many shocks; and separation of interest will occasion separation of connexion, which every honest Irishman must shudder to look at as possible."

Did Mr. Pitt argue from this passage that the Speaker was an advocate for a Legislative Union? No, but he shewed from it that the Speaker confessed that danger was to be apprehended from the collision of separate legislatures, which in their very nature were vehicles of jealousy and instruments of separation. Mr. Pitt quoted the passage he stated from the Right Hon. Gentleman's speech on the Commercial Propositions, which were considered by him as fraught with the greatest possible advantages for Ireland. That measure however failed; and what was it that produced its failure? Jealousy, not of a commercial but political nature: it failed because

because an high-minded nation like ours will be more roused by questions of political authority, than commercial advantage. But had not the Speaker made a further attack on Mr. Pitt? in his answer to the resolutions of the county of Louth, had he not stated that, "The surrender of our separate legislature would destroy the security of our trade, and render our advantages precarious; that our commerce could not be benefited but, might decrease, by an Union?" Was not then Mr. Pitt called upon to disprove these assertions by the Speaker's words in 1785, viz. that "*without an united interest in commerce political Union would receive many shocks;*" and to show from these words that the British minister was called upon to insure that connexion on which the advantages of Ireland depended: and which (Ireland having declined a compact) could only be secured by an Union? When also the Speaker had stated that the linen trade depended solely on the bounties and protection of the Irish Parliament, had not Mr. Pitt a right to prove that the prosperity of this trade depends not on the Irish bounties, but on the bounties and duties imposed by the British Parliament? Let it here be recollected that Mr. Pitt was merely repelling an attack, and that the Right Hon. Gentleman had struck the first blow. But how did the Rt. Hon. Gentleman mistake Mr. Pitt in talking of

the principle of contribution, and how had he misrepresented Mr. Pitt? He stated that Mr. Pitt's sole object was to lay his hands upon the purse of Ireland, whereas the resolutions produced by Mr. Pitt prove diametrically the reverse! But does the Right Hon. Gentleman contend that we are not to pursue a liberal system towards Great Britain? Does he mean to argue that the expence of Imperial protection is to fall on the shoulders of one member of the empire alone, and that the other is to take no share of the burden? Is that the Hon. Gentleman's argument? Is that the principle of connexion which he means to establish? I stated Sir, that if the present principles of connexion remain, they must be followed up by contribution; I shewed the danger to the connexion under that circumstance; and in order to get rid of my argument, it must be contended that Ireland must ever remain separate, must ever be protected by England, and must never contribute to the empire at all. How has the Right Hon. Gentleman misrepresented Mr. Pitt, by stating that he menaced this country with hostility, if we did not embrace an Union; when the whole tendency of Mr. Pitt's speech is to shew, that an Union by force would be ruinous, and that it can only be founded on the inclinations of the people? The statement of Mr. Pitt, which has been stated as a menace,

menace, was necessarily brought forward to obviate the assertions of the Hon. Gentleman, that our trade was owing solely to the independence of the Irish Parliament. If Mr. Pitt has shewn that the trade, and particularly the linen trade depended not on the Irish but the British Legislature, he was forced into the proof by the Right Hon. Gentleman.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had entered at length into a laborious detail upon the commerce of Ireland, and he certainly acknowledged his superiority on such subjects; at the same time he must contend that the commerce of this kingdom was more dependent on England than the commerce of England upon Ireland. He would consider this part of the subject in three points of view; first, our commerce with foreign nations, in which we were totally free; secondly, our colonial commerce, which was a boon from Great Britain; thirdly, our channel trade with Great Britain, which was regulated between the two countries on principles highly advantageous to Ireland.

What was the state of our foreign commerce? On an average of three years of peace previous to 1793,—our exports to foreign nations were 357,324l.—our imports 943,187l. so that there was
a balance

a balance against us of 485,863*l.* per annum. In the average of three years of war to 1797, our exports to foreign nations amounted in value to 239,796*l.* and our imports to 783,535*l.* so that the balance against us was 498,739*l.* a year.

With regard to our colonial trade, which Ireland enjoys not of right, but of favour from Great Britain, and upon the same regulations as British subjects, our average exports to the British colonies for three years of peace ending 1793, amounted in value to 622,034*l.*, our imports to 465,271*l.*—of course we had an annual balance in our favour of 156,763*l.*—Again, in the three years of war, to 1797, our average exports to the colonies were 708,846*l.*, and our imports 388,272*l.*—which, consequently gives a balance annually in our favour of 320,574*l.*

But what are the circumstances of the channel trade? The total value of the exports, generally from this country to Great Britain is 5,612,689*l.*, and the total value of all British exports to Ireland, is 3,554,845*l.*—which gives a balance in our favour of 2,056,844*l.*—Again, the yearly value of Irish manufacture imported into England is, 5,510,825*l.* while the value of English manufacture exported annually

annually to Ireland is only 2,087,672l., consequently the balance in our favour, upon the actual produce and manufacture of the countries is 3,425,153l.

His Lordship next called the attention of the House to the regulations of the tariffe between the two countries—every one of which was highly favourable to Ireland. He observed that on the whole of the imports into Great Britain from Ireland, valued as he had already stated at 5,612,689l. per annum, Great Britain only raises a revenue of 47,562l. whereas Ireland on the imports from Great Britain—amounting to 3,554,845l. raises a large revenue of 648,138l. per annum; besides receiving from Great Britain, duty free, the important articles of hops, coal, tan, and bark.

His Lordship further observed, that the trade of Great Britain with Ireland, forms only 1-9th of the gross commerce of Great Britain, whereas the trade of Ireland with Great Britain forms about 9-10ths of the gross commerce of Ireland. The imports from Ireland form about 1-8th of the whole imports into Great Britain, and the customs raised on them form not the 130th part of the customs of Great Britain. Again, in our trade with

with foreign nations, we incur a loss of little less than 500,000l. per annum, while we gain on our trade with the British colonies, near 400,000l. and on our trade with Great Britain, 2,056,844l. On the whole then, if England lost her trade with Ireland, she would lose only 1-9th of her trade. But if Ireland lost her trade with Great Britain, she would lose 9-10ths of her trade.

Lord Castlereagh next adverted to the assertion of the Speaker, that if Great Britain denied her market to Ireland, she could resort to the colonies of other countries, and could find vent for her manufactures in Spain, in Portugal, and the East Indies. To these assertions he would not oppose any arguments of his own, but would read to the Committee the arguments of the Right Hon. Gentleman himself in 1785, which contained a fuller refutation, and came with higher authority than any statement he could produce.

“The Honourable Gentleman” (meaning Mr. Flood) “seems, with others, to undervalue the British markets for our linens, and that if Britain shall discourage her import, they will find vent elsewhere. I will not pay him so fulsome a compliment as to say he understands commerce, his genius soars perhaps above such reading; but

“but if he did understand it, I would ask him,
 “where would he expect a market to favour the
 “linens of Ireland? Where will he find a market
 “under Heaven for that manufacture, which now
 “brings two millions annually into the kingdom?
 “Will Portugal take them? Will Spain take them?
 “Will France take them? No; we know they
 “will not. Will Russia, Germany, or Holland
 “take them? They are your powerful rivals, and
 “able to undersell you. Where then will you find a
 “market, if England shuts her ports? Will you go
 “to the West Indies? You cannot go to the English
 “colonies; they will be like Britain, there you can
 “have no admittance.—The French, Spanish, and
 “Portuguese have shut their ports long since, your
 “only market then is in the BANKRUPT States of
 “North America, that have not money to pay their
 “just debts, and many provinces of which, if they
 “had the money, have not perhaps the honesty to
 “do it.

“This bankrupt country is to give you the mar-
 “ket Britain affords. No, no; cherish the market
 “you have, you will never get so good; she ever
 “exports with bounty for you. And here let me ob-
 “serve the benefits of exporting, duty free, all our
 “fabrics through her ports, which this settlement
 “secures. You found the way for your linens to

“ foreign places through her ports, by her capitals
 “ and extent of dealing; do not refuse the like for
 “ your other fabrics—the prosperity of the linens
 “ should teach you.”

His Lordship having remarked on the force of this quotation, next called the attention of the Committee to the Speaker's general representations that this country was not dependent on its connection with Great Britain for our linen trade, and that the lowering of the duties which existed in the trade between the two kingdoms would not be beneficial to Ireland. On the first point he read the following extract :

“ The Hon. Gentleman complains of the report of
 “ the English Privy Councils, which say that to put
 “ Ireland and England on a footing of exact recipro-
 “ city as to linens, Ireland ought to give a bounty on
 “ the exportation of English linens, because England
 “ gives a bounty on the exportation of Irish linens.
 “ Can any thing be more just? Yet England makes
 “ no such demand, but is ready by this adjustment
 “ to give additional security to our linen trade for
 “ ever. If indeed the adjustment were to take away
 “ the benefits from Ireland, it would be a good cause
 “ for rejecting it; but as it for ever confirms all the
 “ advantages

“ advantages we derive from our linen trade, and
 “ binds England from making any law that can be
 “ injurious to it; surely Gentlemen that regard that
 “ trade, and whose fortunes and rent depend on its
 “ prosperity, will not entertain a moment's doubt
 “ about embracing the offer.”

As to the point of lowering duties he, quoted the
 Speaker's opinion, expressed in 1785, in the fol-
 lowing terms:

“ Were a man to look for the country most ad-
 “ vantageous to settle manufactures in, what would be
 “ his choice? One where labour and provisions are
 “ cheap, that is Ireland; and what he would next look
 “ for?—why to have a rich, extended and steady
 “ market near him, which England, stretched along-
 “ side affords, and to establish that market for this
 “ country is one great object of this system. Gentle-
 “ men undervalue the reduction of British duties on
 “ our manufactures; I agree with them it may not
 “ operate soon, but we are to look forward in a final
 “ settlement, and it is impossible but that in time,
 “ with as good climate, equal natural powers, cheaper
 “ food, and fewer taxes, we must be able to sell to
 “ them. When commercial jealousy shall be banished
 “ by final settlement, and trade take its natural and

“ steady course, the kingdoms will cease to look to
 “ rivalry; each will make that fabric which it can
 “ do cheapest, and buy from the other what it cannot
 “ make so advantageously. Labour will be then truly
 “ employed to profit, not diverted by duties, boun-
 “ ties, jealousies or legislative interference from its
 “ natural and beneficial course; this system will attain
 “ its real object, consolidating the strength of the re-
 “ maining parts of the Empire, by encouraging the
 “ communications of their market among themselves,
 “ with preference to every part against all strangers.”

Having shortly commented upon these extracts,
 by which he conceived the Speaker to be self-confu-
 ted, his Lordship next adverted to what the Speaker
 had asserted as to the linen trade. He stated that
 on an average of seven years, the number of yards
 exported were,

To Great Britain	-	35,648,706
To the British colonies	-	1,259,868
	Total	36,998,574
To foreign countries	-	4,762,084
	Total	41,760,658

He stated the value of linen exported to England
 for 7 years, taking in cambrick and linen yarn, and
 estimating

estimating Irish linen at 1s. 10d. per yard, which is higher than the custom valuation, but nearer the truth it amounted to 3,153,868l. He then shewed the advantage which we derived by the British duties of 37 per cent. on foreign linens, and the sacrifice which Great Britain made to give us the advantage of her markets. The value of Irish linens consumed in Great Britain for 7 years, at 1s. 10d. per yard, was 3,038,630l.—A duty of 37 per cent. in this sum would amount to 1,124,293l. so that the people of Great Britain, in one view of the subject, pay dearer for their linens than they need, by upwards of one million sterling a year, or, in another view of the subject, suffer duties of one million a year to be imposed on their own people, which would otherwise be raised on the manufactures of Ireland. Or if the Irish manufacture could not come into competition, under such a duty with the foreign fabrick, it would be raised on the foreign to the exclusion of the Irish linens. But were Irish linens subject to the same duty as foreign linens, viz. 37l. per cent. they would be totally excluded from the British market. The quantity now furnished by Ireland would be supplied from abroad, from which Great Britain would levy a duty of 1,124,293l. which she now loses by the favour shewn to Irish linens in admitting them duty free to her market. That this would be the case appears clearly from the fact that

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16,000,000 yards of foreign linen found their way into Great Britain in the course of the last year, notwithstanding the heavy duty to which they were liable, which proves that our linen could in no degree enter into a competition with foreign linen in the British market, and that we owe the command which we have of that market to the liberality of Great Britain, a liberality which she extends to us at the expence of above a million sterling a year; or in other words, we owe it to the bounty of the British Parliament, and not to the support of the Irish Legislature.

But it was said that the linen manufacture was to be encouraged by Great Britain, on a compact that Ireland should relinquish the woollen trade. The value of English woollens imported by Ireland was for three years ending 1793, 599,350*l*. The value of the average for three years to 1796, was 674,000*l*. At the same period the value of our linens exported to Gt. Britain was above 3,000,000*l*.; and was that a compact on the justice or equity of which any reasonable man would rely, when the actual loss to Great Britain on linens was nearly double the total value of the woollens imported into Ireland? He said it was curious to hear the arguments of the Right Hon. Gentleman as to woollens and fuel. First, he says we never can have an extensive

tensive woollen trade, although he states that we had an extensive trade in woollens about 100 years ago ; then he argues the result of our want of fuel, yet he states that we are not dependent on England, though England supplies us with fuel duty free. In answer to the argument of the Speaker that no English capital had arrived in consequence of our free trade, his Lordship stated that this was attributable to the nature of our separate legislatures and the danger of separation ; but that as soon as there was one government and one law for the whole empire, British capital would naturally circulate in every part, when the means for employing and the security for improving it became general. He greatly lamented one part of the speech of the Right Hon. Gentleman, in which he alluded to the possible separation of the two countries, and the possibility of Ireland existing at least commercially, if not politically, without Great Britain. The Right Hon. Gentleman had ever professed himself a friend to the connexion of the two countries ; it seemed to be inconsistent with all his former conduct, and was calculated to create impressions which might have an effect he could never intend. But one of the great arguments of the Speaker was, that the Union would diminish the securities for the bounties on agriculture ; what was the obvious answer to such an insinuation,

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ation, but that the terms of the Union might render it impossible? but if the subject were to be left open, might not a time arise when a discontinuance of bounties throughout the Empire generally would be a benefit? and if the arrangement of them were left to an Imperial Legislature, could the Hon. Gentleman assert it would not be safe in their discretion? or would he contend that the legislature of any empire could have an interest to impoverish one part of its dominions for the aggrandisement of another? Was it not a dereliction of sense and a prostitution of talents to advance such an argument? Another leading argument had been relied upon, that no Union could give security that it would not be infringed; and the income tax had been tortured into a proof that the terms of the Scotch Union had been violated. The feebleness of this argument had been long exposed. The malt tax in Scotland had also been adduced as an instance; but so soon as it was examined, this instance was found untenable. But now the income tax was brought forward, and in order to apply it to the present purpose it was stated to be a land tax, and consequently a breach of the articles of an Union. This however was notoriously not the case; It was made an express article of Union that Scotland should be subjected to the general taxes of the empire. How, therefore, a tax upon general in-

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come could be twisted into a fresh and increased land tax, he could not conceive ; it was no more a tax upon land, than a tax upon any article of consumption which was purchased by the income arising out of land, was a tax upon land. But the security of the Scotch Union did not rest upon the construction of any little article, it rested upon the security of a greater principle : it rested upon this security, that no Minister, no Parliament would be guilty of such madness as for any paltry consideration of profit or taxation to risque the happiness and connexion of the whole empire in a manner which would excite resistance and justify separation. He could have wished the Speaker had been silent respecting the competency of Parliament. He had seen some observations in the resolutions of the County of Louth, intimating a recurrence to first principles, which he could not too much reprobate, and had admired the discretion of the Right Hon. Gentleman in passing them without notice. He wished he had observed the same discretion now. He conceived the principle of the competency of parliament was defined by the right of parliament to consult in every case the good and the happiness of the people, and that no man could question its competency, who either knew or valued the constitution. But if ever such a principle as the incompetency of parliament should be set up, there were few cases to

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which it might not apply ; it would be used by every enemy to the constitution, and fall like a firebrand among the people. His Lordship said he would advert only to one argument more, which was, the imputation which had been made on those speeches which had stated our religious dissensions. It was uncandidly insinuated that the object of those speeches was to encrease our religious animosities. Their object was to shew that whilst Ireland adhered to a separate legislature, we could not act less on a principle of religious jealousy than we did ; but that if United, our parliament, with the legislature of Great Britain, could act upon a more liberal system of policy with entire security. His Lordship concluded by returning his thanks to the Committee for their attention, and saying that at so late an hour he would not detain them with further observations.



F I N I S.